

BELL's

BRITISH THEATRE.

CONSISTING OF

THE MOST ESTEEMED

ENGLISH PLAYS.

VOL. XXXIII.

CONTAINING

BONDUCA, BY COLMAN.
ZENOIA, — MURPHY.
THE WAY OF THE WORLD, . — CONGREVE.
THE SCHOOL FOR GUARDIANS, — MURPHY.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR, AND UNDER THE DIRECTION OF,
GEORGE CAWTHORN, BRITISH LIBRARY, STRAND.

1797.

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ДЯТАНТ НАІТІЯ



BONDUC A.

A

TRAGEDY,

ALTERED FROM

BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER,

AND ADAPTED TO THE STAGE

BY GEORGE COLMAN, ESQ.

AS PERFORMED AT

THE THEATRE-ROYAL, HAY-MARKET.

REGULATED FROM THE PROMPT-BOOK,

By Permission of the Manager.

The Lines distinguished by inverted Commas, are omitted in the Representation; and those printed in Italics are the Additions of the Theatre.

LONDON:

Printed for, and under the Direction of,
GEORGE CAWTHORN, British Library, STRAND.

M DCC XC VI.



GEORGE COLMAN, ESQ.

THIS gentleman was the son of Francis Colman, Esq. his Majesty's Resident at the Court of the Grand Duke of Tuscany at Florence, by a sister of the late Countess of Bath. He was born at Florence, and had the honour of having the late King George II. whose name he bears, for his godfather. He received his education at Westminster-school, where he very early shewed his poetical talents. The first performance by him is a Copy of Verses addressed to his cousin Lord Pulteney, written in the year 1747, while he was at Westminster, and since printed in the St. James's Magazine, a work published by his unfortunate friend Robert Lloyd.

From Westminster-school he removed to Oxford, and became a Student of Christ-Church. It was here at a very early age, he engaged with his friend Bonnel Thornton, in publishing *The Connoisseur*, a periodical paper which appeared once a week, and was continued from January 31, 1754, to September 30, 1756.

When the age of the writers of this entertaining paper is considered, the wit and humour, the spirit, the good sense and shrewd observations on life and manners, with which it abounds, will excite some degree of wonder, but will, at the same time, evidently point out the extraordinary talents which were afterwards to be more fully displayed in the *Jealous Wife*, and the *Clandestine Marriage*.

At the recommendation of his friends, or his choice, but probably the former, induced him to fix upon the Law for his profession; and he accordingly was entered of Lincoln's-Inn, and in due season called to the bar. He attended there a very short time, though if our recollection does not mislead us, he was seen often enough in the Courts to prevent his abandoning

the profession merely for want of encouragement. It is reasonable, however, to suppose, that he felt more pleasure in attending to the Muse than to Briefs and Reports; and it will, therefore, excite no wonder that he took the earliest opportunity of relinquishing pursuits not congenial to his taste. Apollo and Littleton (says Wycherley) seldom meet in the same brain.

On the 18th of March 1753, he took the degree of Master of Arts at Oxford, and in the year 1760, his first dramatic piece, *Polly Honeycombe*, was acted at Drury-Lane, with great success. For several years before, the Comic Muse seemed to have relinquished the stage. No comedy had been produced at either theatre since the year 1751, when Moore's *Gil Blas* was with difficulty performed nine nights. At length, in the beginning of the year 1761, three different authors were candidates for public favour in the same walk, almost at the same time, viz. Mr. Murphy, who exhibited the *Way to Keep Him*; Mr. Macklin, the *Married Libertine*; and Mr. Colman, the *Jealous Wife*. The former and latter of these were most successful, and the latter in a much higher degree.—Indeed, when the excellent performances of Messrs. Garrick, Yates, O'Brien, King, Palmer, Moody, with Mrs. Pritchard, Clive, and Miss Pritchard, are recollect^d, it would have shewn a remarkable want of taste in the Town not to have followed, as they did, this admirable piece with the greatest eagerness and perseverance.

On July 1764, Lord Bath died, and on that event Mr. Colman found himself in circumstances fully sufficient to enable him to follow the bent of his genius. The first publication which he produced, after this period, was a translation of the Comedies of Terence, in the execution of which he rescued that author from the hands of as tasteless and ignorant a set of writers as ever disgraced the name of translators. Whoever would wish to see the spirit of the ancient bard transfused into the English language, must look for it in Mr. Colman's version.

GEORGE COLMAN.

The successor of Lord Bath, General Pulteney, died in 1767, and Mr. Colman again found himself remembered in his Will, by a second annuity, which confirmed the independency of his fortune. He seems, however, to have felt no charms in an idle life; as, in 1767, he united with Messrs. Harris, Rutherford and Powell, in the purchase of Covent-Garden Theatre, and took upon himself the laborious office of Acting Manager. The differences which arose from this association are too recent to be forgot, and the causes of them perhaps too ridiculous to be recorded.

After continuing Manager of Covent-Garden Theatre seven years, Mr. Colman sold his share and interest therein to Mr. Leake, one of his then partners, and in 1777, purchased of Mr. Foote the Theatre in the Hay-market. The estimation which the entertainments, exhibited under his direction, were held in by the public, the reputation which the Theatre acquired, and the continual concourse of the polite world, during the height of summer, sufficiently spoke the praises of Mr. Colman's management.

To sagacity in discovering the talents of his performers, he joined the inclination and ability to display them with every advantage. To him Mr. Henderson, Miss Farren, Mrs. Bannister, Miss George, Mrs. Wells, and, in some measure, Mr. Edwin (whose comic powers had been buried a whole season under Mr. Foote's management) besides some others, owed their introduction to a London audience.

Notwithstanding Mr. Colman's close attention to the Theatre at this time, he did not entirely neglect his classical studies, but gave the public a new translation and commentary on Horace's Art of Poetry, in which he produced a new system to explain this very difficult Poem.

Besides the Dramatic Works of Mr. Colman, and those we have already mentioned, he was the author of a Preface to the last edition of Beaumont and Fletcher, a Dissertation pre-

fixed to Massinger, a series of papers in the St. James's Chronicle under the title of *The Genius*, and many other fugitive pieces.

At the close of the Theatrical Season of 1785, Mr. Colman was seized at Margate with the palsy, and at the beginning of the season of 1789, first shewed symptoms of derangement of his mind, which increasing gradually, left him in a state of idiotism.—On this occasion the concluding lines of his friend Churchill's Epistle to Hogarth, will naturally intrude themselves on our readers attention:

“ Sure 'tis a curse which angry fates impose
To mortify man's arrogance, that those
Who're fashion'd of some better sort of clay,
Much sooner than the common herd decay.
What bitter pangs must humbled genius feel,
In their last hour to view a Swift and Steele!
How must ill-boding horrors fill her breast,
When she beholds men mark'd above the rest,
For qualities most dear, plung'd from that height,
And sunk, deep sunk, in second childhood's night.
Are men, indeed, such things? And are the best
More subject to this evil than the rest,
To drivel out whole years of ideot breath,
And sit the monuments of living death?
O, galling circumstance to human pride!
Abasing thought! but not to be deny'd.
With curious art the brain, too finely wrought,
Preys on herself, and is destroy'd by thought.
Constant attention wears the active mind,
Blots out her powers, and leaves a blank behind.”

In this sad state he was committed to the care of a person at Paddington, and the management of the Theatre entrusted to his son, with an allowance of 600*l.* a year.

Mr. Colman died on the 14th of August 1794, at the age of 62, at Paddington. A few hours before his death he was seized with violent spasms, which were succeeded by a melancholy stupor, in which he drew his last breath.

The following is a list of this Gentleman's Dramatic
Pieces, *viz.*

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Polly Honeycombe. D. | 16. Achilles in Petticoats. |
| N. 1760. 8vo. | O. altered, 1774. 8vo. |
| 2. The Jealous Wife. C. | 17. The Man of Business. |
| 1761. 8vo. | C. 1774. 8vo. |
| 3. The Musical Lady. F. | 18. Epiccene; or, The Sil-
ent Woman. C. altered |
| 1762. 8vo. | 1776. 8vo. |
| 4. Philaster. T. altered, | 19. The Spleen; or, Isling-
ton Spa. C. P. 1776. 8vo. |
| 1763. 8vo. | 20. Occasional Prelude,
1776. 8vo. |
| 5. The Deuce is in him. F. | 21. New Brooms. O. P.
1776. 8vo. |
| 1763. 8vo. | 22. The Spanish Barber.
C. 1777. N. P. |
| 6. A Midsummer's Night Dream. Altered, 1763. 8vo. | 23. The Female Chevalier.
C. altered, 1778. N. P. |
| 7. A Fairy Tale. 1764.
8vo. | 24. Bonduca. T. altered,
1778. 8vo. |
| 8. The Clandestine Marriage. C. 1766. 8vo. | 25. The Suicide. C. 1778,
N. P. |
| 9. The English Merchant. C. 1767. 8vo. | 26. The Separate Maintenance. C. 1779. N. P. |
| 10. King Lear. T. altered
1768. 8vo. | 27. The Manager in Dis-
tress. Prel. 8vo. 1780. |
| 11. The Oxonian in Town. C. 1769. 8vo. | 28. "Preludio." Acted at
the H. M. before the Beggars
Opera. 1781. n. p. |
| 12. Man and Wife. C.
1769. 8vo. | 29. "The Election of Ma-
nagers." Prel. Acted at the
H. M. 1784. n. p. |
| 13. The Portrait. B. 1770.
8vo. | |
| 14. The Fairy Prince. M.
1771. 8vo. | |
| 15. Comus. M. altered
1772. 8vo. | |

Also a translation of the Comedies of Terence, 4to. 1765.

These pieces have considerable merit. In his *petite pieces* the plots are simple, and no great matter of incident introduced into them; yet they contain strong character, and are aimed at the ridiculing of fashionable and prevailing follies, which ought to be made essential points of consideration in every production of the sock. His more regular Comedies have the same merit with the others as to the preservation of character, which reflect honour on the author; and afford us the prospect of an ample contribution from this quarter to the variety of our dramatic entertainments of this more difficult kind.

Dramatis Personae.

HAY-MARKET.

Men.

CARATACH,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Digges.
HENGΩ,	-	-	-	-	Master Edwin.
HENNIUS,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Usher.
SUETONIUS,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Gardner.
PENIUS,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Aickin.
PETILLIUS,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Palmer.
JUNIUS,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Lamash.
DEMETRIUS,	-	-	-	-	Mr. R. Palmer.
DRUSIUS,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Griffin.
CURIUS,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Egan.
DECIUS,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Davis.
MACER,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Massey.
JUDAS,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Parsons.

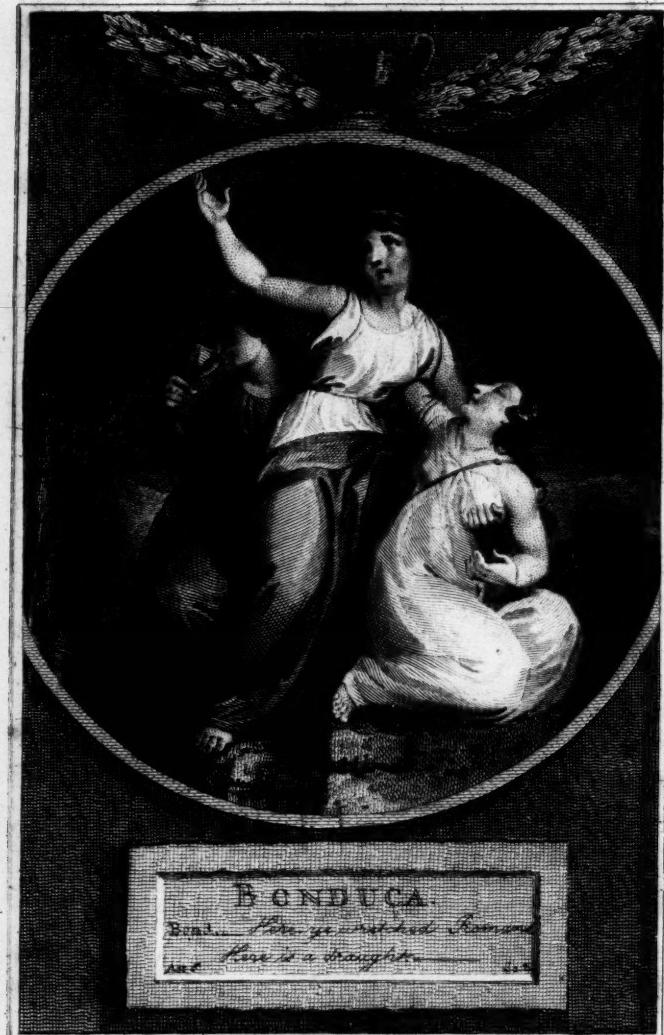
Women.

BONDUCA,	-	-	-	-	Miss Sherry.
First DAUGHTER,	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Massey.
Second DAUGHTER,	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Greville.

Druids, Soldiers, Attendants, &c.

The Music by Purcell.—Scene, Britain.

7 JU 52



BONDUCA

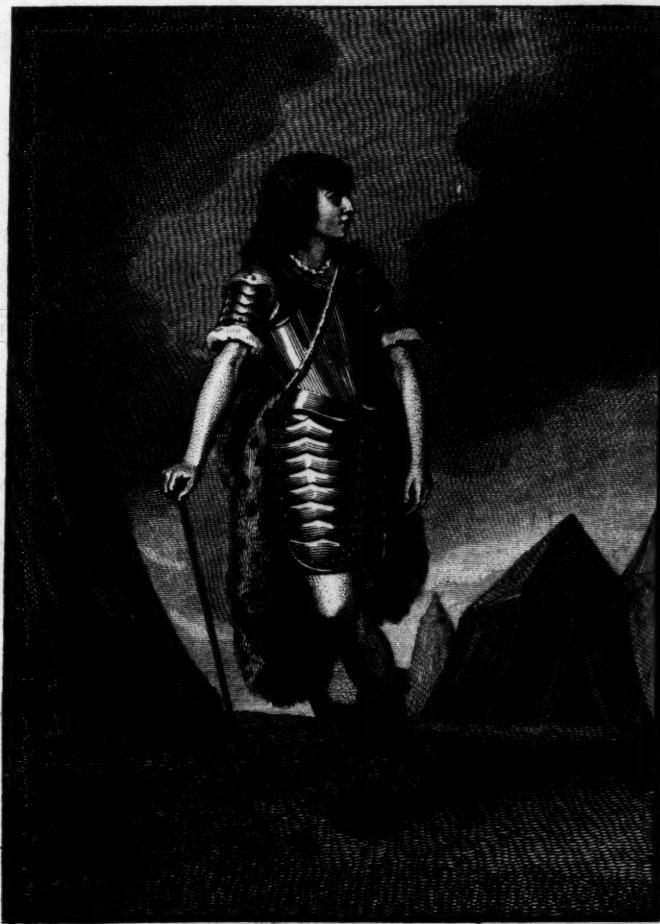
Read... like ye met her
and here is a draught

Stuart del. Saunders sc.
London Printed for G. Cawthron British Library, Strand F. 1. 1. 55.

Ast II.

BONDUCA.

J: III.



Robert del.

Audinet sc.

MASTER DE CAMP as HENGO.

Hengo. Why I dare fight with Meek!

London. Printed for G. Cuthbert, British Library, 2nd Feb: 1725.

7 JU 32



BONDUCA.

ACT I. SCENE I.

The Roman Camp. JUNIUS and PETILLIUS enter.

Petillius.

WHAT ail'st thou, man? Dost thou want meat?

Jun. No.

Pet. Clothes?

Jun. Neither. For Heaven's love, leave me!

Pet. Drink?

Jun. You tire me.

Pet. Come, it is drink; for what affliction
Can light so heavy on a soldier,
To dry him up as thou art, but no drink?
Thou shalt have drink.

Jun. Prythee, Petillius—

Pet. And, by mine honour, much drink, valiant drink!

I see as fair as day, that thou want'st drink:
Did not I find thee gaping, like an oyster
For a new tide? Thy very thoughts lie bare,
Like a low ebb; thy soul, that rid in sack,
Lies moor'd for want of liquor;
And all thy body's chap'd and crack'd like timber,
For want of moisture: what canst thou want but drink?

Jun. You have too much on't.

Pet. It may be, a wench too ; say it be ; come, soldier,
Thou shalt have both : a pretty valiant fellow,
Die for a little lap and roguery ?

Hear, thou noble Roman,
The son of her that loves a soldier,
Hear, what I promised for thee, when thy mother
Sent thee to fight in Britain. Thus I said :

- ‘Lady, I take thy son to my companion ;
- ‘Lady, I love thy son, thy son loves war,
- ‘The war loves danger, danger drink, drink discipline,
- ‘Which is the field of Mars, the camp of Venus ;
- ‘These two beget commanders : Fear not, lady ;
- ‘Thy son shall lead.’

Jun. ’Tis a strange thing, Petillius,
That so ridiculous and loose a mirth
Can master your affections.

Pet. Any mirth,
And any way, of any subject, Junius,
Is better than unmanly mustiness.
What harm’s in drink ? in a good wholesome wench,
I do beseech you, sir, what error ? Yet
It cannot out of my head handsomely,
But thou wouldest fain be drunk ; come, no more fooling ;
The general has new wine, new come over.

Jun. He must have new acquaintance for it too,
For I will none, I thank ye.

Pet. ‘None, I thank you !’
A short and touchy answer ! ‘None, I thank you !’
No company, no drink, no wench ; ‘I thank you !’
You shall be worse entreated, sir.

Jun. Petillius,
As thou art honest, leave me !
Pet. Yes ; I will leave you, Junius,

And leave you to the boys, that very shortly
Shall all salute you, by your new surname
Of Junius, 'None, I thank you.' I have found you,
Your lays and out-leaps! You're in love, I know it;
You are an ass, and all the camp shall know it;
A peevish idle boy, your dame shall know it;
A wronger of my care, yourself shall know it.

JUDAS, and three Soldiers enter.

Judas. A bean ! a princely diet, a full banquet,
To what we compass.

Pet. What ail these rascals?

1st Sold. If this hold, we're starv'd.

Judas. For my part, friends,
Which is but twenty beans a-day, (a hard world
For officers, and men of action !)
For mine own part, I say, I'm starv'd already.

2d Sold. I'll fight no more.

Pet. You'll hang then !

Ye dogs' heads in the porridge-pot ! ye fight no more ?
Does Rome depend upon your resolution
For eating mouldy pie-crust ?

3d Sold. Would we had it !

Judas. I may do service, captain.

Pet. In a fish-market.

You, corporal Curry-comb, what will your fighting
Profit the commonwealth ? D'you hope to triumph ?
Or dare your vamping valour, goodman Cobler,
Clap a new soal to th' kingdom ? 'Sdeath, ye dog-whelps,
You fight, or not fight ?

Judas. Captain !

Pet. Out, ye flesh flies !

How long is 't since thou eat'st last ? Wipe thy mouth,
And then tell truth.

Judas. I have not eat to th' purpose——

Pet. 'To th' purpose?' what's that? half a cow, and
garlick?

Ye rogues, my company eat turf, and talk not :
Timber they can digest, and fight upon 't ;
Old mats, and mud with spoons, rare meats. Your shoes,
slaves;

Dare ye cry out for hunger, and those extant ?
Suck your sword-hilts, ye slaves, if ye be valiant.

'To the purpose?' Dost thou see that gentleman,
That melancholy monsieur ?

Jun. Pray you, Petillius !

Pet. He has not eat these three weeks.

2d Sold. H' has drunk the more then.

Pet. Nor drunk nor slept these two months.

Urge him to th' point, he'll find you out a food
That needs no teeth nor stomach ; a strange furnity,
Will feed you up as fat as hens i' th' foreheads,
And make ye fight like fitchoks : to him !

Judas. Captain——

Jun. Do you long to have your throats cut ?

Pet. See what mettle

It makes in him : Two meals more of this melancholy,
And there lies the bold Briton, Caratach.

Judas. We do beseech you——

Jun. Out of my thoughts, ye slaves ! your poor starv'd
spirits

Can make me no oblations ; else, oh, Love !
Thou proudly blind destruction, I would send thee
Whole hecatombs of hearts, to bleed my sorrows !

Judas. Alas, he lives by love, sir. [Exit Junius.

Pet. So he does, sir ;
Fall but in love now, as ye see example,
There's so much charge sav'd, and your hunger's ended.

[Drum afar off.

Away ! I hear the general. Jog, and talk not.

[Exeunt Judas and Soldiers.

SUETONIUS, DEMETRIUS, DECIUS, and Soldiers enter.

Suet. Demetrius, is the messenger dispatch'd
To Penius, to command him to bring up
The Volan's regiment ?

Dem. He is there by this time.

Suet. And are the horse well view'd we brought from Mona?

Dec. The troops are full and lusty.

Suet. Good Petillius,

Look to those eating rogues that bawl for victuals,
And stop their throats a day or two : Provision
Waits but the wind to reach us.

Pet. Sir, already

I have been tampering with their stomachs, which I find
As deaf as adders to delays. Your clemency
Hath made their murmurs mutinies ; nay, rebellions ;
Now, an they want but mustard, they're in uproars !
This gave Bonduca time, and strength, and pride,
To brave us to oar teeth, and scorn our ruins.

Suet. Nay, chide not, good Petillius ! I confess
My will to conquer Mona, and long stay
To execute that will, let in these losses ;
All shall be right again ; and as a pine
Rent from Oeta, by a sweeping tempest,
Jointed again, and made a mast, defies
Those angry winds that split him ; so will I
Steer through these swelling dangers, plow their prides up,

And bear like thunder through their loudest tempests.

They keep the field still ?

Dem. Confident and full.

Pet. In such a number one would swear they grew :

They are so infinite, so ever-springing,

We shall be killed with killing ; of desperate women,

That neither fear or shame found ; say the men fail,

They 'll poison us with their petticoats ; say they fail,

They 've priests enough to pray us into nothing.

Suet. These are imaginations, dreams of nothing :

The man that doubts or fears ——

Dec. I 'm free of both.

Dem. The self-same I.

Pet. And I as free as any ;

As careless of my flesh, of that we call life,

So I may lose it nobly, as indifferent

As if it were my diet.

Suet. Then no doubt

The day must needs be ours. One single valour,

The virtues of the valiant Caratach,

More doubts me than all Britain. He 's a soldier

So forg'd out, and so temper'd for great actions,

So fortunate in all, that his mere name

Fights in a thousand men, himself in millions,

To make him Roman : but no more. Petillius,

How stands your charge ?

Pet. Ready for all employments.

Suet. To-morrow we 'll draw out and view the cohorts.

Where 's Junius ?

Pet. In 's cabin, most lamentably loving,
To the tune of Queen Dido.

Suet. 'T will make him fight the nobler. With what lady ?

Pet. The devil's dam, Bonduca's daughter,
Her youngest, crack'd i' th' ring.

Suet. I'm sorry for him :
But sure his own discretion will reclaim him :
He must deserve our anger else. Good captains,
Apply yourselves in all the pleasing forms
Ye can unto the soldiers ; tell 'em, if now they conquer,
The fate of all the kingdom lies before 'em ;
Their shames forgot, their honours infinite,
And want for ever banish'd. Two days hence,
Our fortunes, and our swords, and gods be for us ! [Exeunt.]

SCENE II.

The British Camp. BONDUCA, Daughters, CARATACH,
HENGO, NENNUS, and Soldiers enter.

Bond. The hardy Romans ? Oh, ye gods of Britain,
The rust of arms, the blushing shame of soldiers !
Shame, how they flee ! Dare they send these to seek us,
These Roman girls ? Is Britain grown so wanton ?
Twice we have beat 'em, Nennius ; and a woman,
A woman beat 'em, Nennius.

Car. So it seems ;
A man would shame to talk so.

Bond. Who 's that ?

Car. I.

Bond. Cousin, d' you grieve my fortunes ?
Car. No, Bonduca ;
If I grieve, 't is the bearing of your fortunes :
You put too much wind to your sail ; discretion
And hardy valour are the twins of honour,
And, nurs'd together, make a conqueror ;
Divided, but a talker. 'T is a truth,
That Rome has fled before us twice, and routed ;
A truth we ought to crown the gods for, lady ;

But we that have been victors, beat ourselves
When we insult upon our honour's subject.

Bond. My valiant cousin, is it foul to say
What liberty and honour bid us do,
And what the gods allow us?

Car. No, Bonduca;
So what we say exceed not what we do.
You call the Romans, 'fearful, fleeing Romans,'
Does this become a doer? Are they such?

Bond. They are no more.
Car. Where is your conquest then?
Why are your altars crown'd with wreaths of flowers?
The holy Druids now composing songs
Of everlasting life to victory?
Why are these triumphs, lady?—for a May-game?
For hunting a poor herd of wretched Romans?
Is it no more? Shut up your temples, Britons,
Let's home and sleep!—Oh, Nennius!
Thou hadst a noble uncle, knew a Roman,
And how to speak him.

Bond. By the gods, I think
You dote upon these Romans, Caratach!
Car. Witness these wounds I do; they were fairly given!
I love an enemy. Yellow-tressed Hymen
Ne'er crown'd a longing virgin with more joy,
Than I am married to that man that wounds me:
And are not all these Romans? Ten struck battles
I suck'd these honour'd scars from, and all Roman;
Ten years of bitter nights and heavy marches,
(When many a frozen storm sung through my cuirass,
And made it doubtful whether that or I
Were the more stubborn metal) have I wrought through,
And all to try these Romans.
Have not I seen the Britons—

Bond. What ?

Car. Dishearten'd,

Run, run, Bonduca ! not the quick rack swifter :
I 've seen these Britons, that you magnify,
Run, as they would have out-run Time, and roaring,
Basely for mercy roaring ; the light shadows,
That in a thought scur o'er the fields of corn,
Halted on crutches to 'em.

Bond. Oh, ye powers,
What scandals do I suffer !

Car. Yes, Bonduca,
I 've seen thee run too, and thee, Nennius ;
Yea, run apace, both ; then when Penius
(The Roman girl !) cut through your armed carts,
And drove 'em headlong on ye down the hill.

Nen. And what did you do then, Caratach ?

Car. I fled too,
But not so fast ; your jewel had been lost then,
Young Hengo there ; he check'd me, Nennius :
For when your fears out-run him, then stept I,
Took him, and with my tough belt, to my back
I buckled him ; behind him my broad shield ;
And then I followed. If I say I fought
Five times in bringing off this bud of Britain,
I lie not, Nennius. Neither had you heard
Me speak of this, or ever seen the child more,
But that the son of Virtue, Penius,
Seeing me steer through all these storms of danger,
My helm still in my hand, he cried out nobly,
' Go, Briton, bear thy lion's whelp off safely,
' And let me meet thee once again in arms ;
' Then, if thou stand'st, thou 'rt mine.' I took his offer,
And here I am to honour him.

Bond. Oh, cousin,
From what a flight of honour hast thou check'd me!
Yet, let me think we conquer'd.

Car. Do ; but so think it, as we may be conquer'd :
And where we have found virtue, though in those
That came to make us slaves, let's cherish it.

Bond. No more ; I see myself. Th' hast made me, cousin,
More than my fortunes durst, for they abus'd me,
And wound me up so high, I swell'd with glory :
Shall we have peace ? for now I love these Romans.

Car. Thy love and hate are both unwise ones, lady.

Bond. Your reason ? Is not peace the end of arms ?

Car. Not where the cause implies a general conquest :
Had we a diff'rence with some petty isle,
Or with our neighbours, lady, for our landmarks,
After a day of blood, peace might be argued ;
But where we grapple for the ground we live on,
The liberty we hold as dear as life,
And with those swords that know no end of battle,
It must not be. No ; as they are our foes,
And those that must be so until we tire 'em ;
Let's use the peace of honour, that's fair dealing,
But for our ends our swords !

Bond. Caratach,
As thou hast nobly spoken, shall be done ;
And Hengo to thy charge I here deliver.
The Romans shall have worthy wars.

Car. They shall :
And, little sir, when your young bones grow stiffer,
And when I see you able in a morning
To beat a dozen boys, and then to breakfast,
I'll tie you to a sword.

Hengo. And what then, uncle ?

Car. Then you must kill, sir, the next valiant Roman
That calls you knave.

Hengo. And must I kill but one?

Car. A hundred, boy, I hope.

Hengo. I hope five hundred.

Car. That is a noble boy! Come, worthy lady,
Let's to our several charges; and henceforth
Allow an enemy both weight and worth. [Exeunt.

ACT II. SCENE I.

The Tent of Penius. PENIUS, REGULUS, and MACER enter.

Penius.

I MUST come?

Macer. So the general commands, sir.

Pen. But did he say, I must come?

Macer. So delivered.

Pen. How long is't, Regulus, since I commanded
In Britain here?

Reg. About five years, great Penius.

Pen. The general some five months. Are all my actions
So poor and lost, my services so barren,
That I'm remember'd in no nobler language
But must come up?

Macer. I do beseech you, sir,
Weigh but the time's estate.

Pen. Yes, good lieutenant,
I do, and his that sways it. Must come up?
Am I turned bare centurion? I must, my language?

CURIUS enters.

Cur. Penius, where lies the host?

Pen. Where fate may find 'em.

Cur. Are they ingirt?

Pen. The battle's lost.

Cur. So soon?

Pen. No; but 'tis lost, because it must be won;
The Britons must be victors. Tell the great general
My companies are no faggots to fill breaches;
Myself no man that *must*, or *shall*, can carry.

[Exit.]

Cur. Pray gods this breed no mischief!

Reg. He's a brave fellow;
And but a little hide his haughtiness,
(Which is but sometimes neither, on some causes)
He shews the worthiest Roman this day living.
You may, good Curius, to the general
Make all things seem the best.

Cur. I shall endeavour.

Pray for our fortunes, gentlemen; if we fall,
This one farewell serves for a funeral.
The gods make sharp our swords, and steel our hearts!

Reg. We dare, alas! but cannot fight our parts.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

The Roman Camp. PETILLIUS and DEMETRIUS meeting.

Pet. How now, Demetrius? Are we drawn?

Dem. 'Tis doing;

Your company stands fair. But, pray you, where's Junius?
Half his command are wanting, with some forty
That Decius leads.

Pet. Hunting for victuals;
Upon my life, free-booting rogues! their stomachs
Are like a miser's purse, ne'er satisfied.

Dem. I wonder how they dare stir, knowing the enemy
Master of all the country.

Pet. Resolute hungers
Know neither fears nor faiths.

Dem. They may be hang'd though.

Pet. There's their joyful supper:
And no doubt they are at it.

Dem. But for Heaven's sake,
How does young Junius?

Pet. Drawing on, poor gentleman.

Dem. What, to his end?

Pet. To the end of all flesh, woman.

Dem. This love has made him a stout soldier.

Pet. Oh, a great one.

Fit to command young goslings. But what news?

Dem. I think the messenger's come back from Penius
By this time; let's go know.

Pet. What will you say now
If he deny to come, and take exceptions
At some half syllable, or sound deliver'd
With an ill accent, or some stile left out?

Dem. I cannot think he dare.

Pet. He dare speak treason;
But that's all one: I'll lay you my black armour
To twenty crowns, he comes not.

Dem. Done.

Pet. You'll pay?

Dem. I will.

Pet. Then, keep thine old use, Penius!
Be stubborn and vain-glorious, and I thank thee.
Come, let's go pray for six hours; most of us
I fear will trouble Heaven no more. Two good blows
Struck home at two commanders of the Britons,
And my part's done.

Dem. I do not think of dying.

Pet. 'T is possible we may live ; but, Demetrius,
With what strange legs, and arms, and eyes, and noses,
Let carpenters and copper-smiths consider.

Dem. Come, let's have better thoughts ; mine's on your
armour.

Pet. Mine's in your purse, sir : let's go try the wager !

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

The British Camp. JUDAS, and his four Companions enter
(balters about their necks) and NENNUS following.

Nen. Come, hang 'em presently. What made your rogue-
ships

Prowling for victuals here ? are we your friends ?
Or do you come for spies ? Tell me, directly,
Would you not willingly be hanged now ? Don't ye long
for't ?

Judas. What, say ye ? Shall we hang in this vein ? Hang
we must,

And 'tis as good to dispatch it merrily ;
Then pleasantly be't :
Captain, the truth is, we had as leave hang
With meat in our mouths, as ask your pardon empty.

Nen. These are brave hungers.
What say you to a leg of beef now, sirrah ?
Judas. Bring me acquainted with it, and I'll tell ye.

CARATACH enters.

Car. Now, what's the matter ?
What are these fellows ? what's the crime committed,
That they wear necklaces ?

Nen. They're Roman rogues,
Taken a-foraging.

Car. Is that all, Nennius?

Judas. Would I were fairly hang'd! This is the devil,
The kill-cow Caratach.

Car. And you would hang 'em?

Nen. Are they not enemies?

Car. Enemies? flea-traps!
Pluck off your halters, fellows.

Nen. Take heed, Caratach;
Taint not your wisdom.

Car. Wisdom, Nennius!
Why, who shall fight against us, make our honours,
And give a glorious day into our hands,
If we dispatch our foes thus? What's their offence?
Stealing a loaf or two to keep out hunger?
Do these deserve the gallows? They are hungry,
Poor hungry knaves, no meat at home left, starv'd:
Art thou not hungry?

Judas. Monstrous hungry.

Car. He looks

Like Hunger's self. Get 'em some victuals
And wine, to cheer their hearts; quick!—Hang up poor
pilchers!

Nen. Caratach,

I'll leave you to your will.

Car. I'll answer all, sir.

HENGO enters.

Sit down, poor knaves!—Why, where's this wine and
victuals?

Who waits there?

Hengo. Who are these, uncle?

Car. They are Romans, boy.

Hengo. Are these they

That vex mine aunt so? can these fight? they look
Like empty scabbards all, no mettle in 'em;
Like men of clouts, set to keep crows from orchards:
Why, I dare fight with these.

Car. That's my good chicken! —

And how d' ye? how d' ye feel your stomachs?

Judas. Wondrous apt, sir,
As shall appear when time calls. [Viuals brought in.]

Car. That's well; down with't!
A little grace will serve your turns. Eat softly!
You'll choke, ye knaves, else. Give 'em wine!

Judas. Not yet, sir;
We're even a little busy.

Hengo. Can that fellow
Do any thing but eat? Thou fellow!

Judas. Away, boy,
Away! this is no boy's play.

Hengo. By Heaven, uncle,
If valour lie i' th' teeth, he's the most valiant.

Car. I am glad to hear you talk, sir.

Hengo. Good uncle, tell me,
What's the price of a couple of cramm'd Romans?

Car. Some twenty Britons, boy; these are good soldiers.

Hengo. Do not the cowards eat hard too?

Car. No more, boy.

More meat, I say! Upon my conscience,
The poor rogues have not eat this month! how terribly
They charge upon their viuals! Dare ye fight thus?

Judas. believe it, sir, like devils.

Car. Well said, Famine!

Here's to thy general.

Judas. Most excellent captain,
I will now pledge thee.

Car. And to-morrow night, say to him,
His head is mine.

Judas. I can assure you, captain,
He will not give it for this washing.

Car. Well said.
Fill 'em more wine; give 'em full bowls.—Which of you all
now,

In recompense of this good, dare but give me
A sound knock in the battle?

Judas. Delicate captain,
To do thee a sufficient recompense,
I'll knock thy brains out.

Car. Do it.

Hengo. Thou dar'st as well be hang'd, thou skin of man!
An only eating rogue! kill my sweet uncle?
Oh, that I were a man!

Judas. By this wine, which I
Will drink to captain Junius, who loves
The queen's most excellent majesty's little daughter
Most sweetly, and most fearfully, I'll do it.

Hengo. Uncle, I'll kill him with a great pin.

Car. No more, boy! He shall not.
I'll pledge thy captain. To ye all, good fellows!
Let's see you sweat
To-morrow blood and spirit, boys; this wine
Turn'd to stern valour.

Judas. [Rising.] Captain, we thank you heartily
For your good cheer; and if we meet to-morrow,
One of us pays for't.

Car. Get 'em guides; their wine
Has over-mastered 'em.

A Servant enters.

Go, guide 'em, and see 'em fairly onward.

Judas. Meaning me, sir?

Serv. The same.

The youngest daughter to the queen entreats you

To give this privately to captain Junius;

This for your pains!

Judas. I rest her humble servant;
Commend me to thy lady. Keep your files, boys.

Serv. I must instruct you further.

Judas. Keep your files there!
Order, sweet friends; faces about now.

Serv. Here, sir;
Here lies your way.

Judas. Bless the founders, I say!
Fairly, good soldiers, fairly march now; close, boys!

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

The Roman Camp. Suetonius, Petilius, Demetrius, Decius, and Macer enter.

Suet. Bid me be wise, and keep me where I am,
And so be safe? not come, because commanded?
Was it not thus?

Macer. It was, sir.

Suet. Must come so heinous to him, so distasteful?

Macer. Sir, The regiment was willing, and advanced too,
The captains at all points steel'd up; when Penius
Stept like a stormy cloud 'twixt them and hopes.

Suet. And stopt their resolutions?

Macer. True.

Suet. Well, Penius,

I cannot think thee coward yet; and treacherous

I dare not think: th' hast lopt a limb off from me;

Yet, ere the sun set, thou'lt too late repent this.

That wine I have, see it, Demetrius,

Distributed amongst the soldiers,

To make 'em high and lusty; when that's done,

Petillius, give the word through, that the eagles

May presently advance. No man discover,

Upon his life, the enemies' full strength,

But make it of no value. Decius,

Are your starv'd people yet come home?

Dec. I hope so.

Suet. Keep 'em in more obedience: This is no time

To chide; I could be angry else, and say more to you:

But come, let's order all. Whose sword is sharpest,

And valour equal to his sword this day,

Shall be my saint.

Pet. We shall be holy all then.

Give me my money. [To Demetrius.

Dem. I confess 'tis due, sir,

And presently I'll pay it. [Exit.

Manent DECIUS. JUDAS, and his Company enter.

Judas. Captain! captain! I've brought 'em off again;
The drunkenest slaves!

Dec. Plague confound your rogueships!

I'll call the general, and have ye hang'd all.

For you, sirrah, that are the ringleader

To these devices, whose maw is never cramm'd,

I'll have an engine—

Judas. Captain, good words, fair words,
Sweet words, good captain : If you like not us,
Farewell ! we have employment.

Dec. Where hast thou been ?

Judas. There where you dare not be, with all your
valour.

Dec. Where's that ?

Judas. With the best good fellow living ;
The king of all good fellows.

Dec. Who's that ?

Judas. Caratach.
Do you as much now, as you dare. Sweet Caratach !
You talk of a good fellow, of true drinking ;
Well, go thy ways, old Caratach ! Besides the drink, cap-
tain,

The bravest running banquet of black puddings,
Pieces of glorious beef—

Dec. How scap'd ye hanging ?

Judas. Hanging's a dog's death, we are gentlemen ;
And I say still, old Caratach !

Dec. Belike, then,
You are turn'd rebels all.

Judas. We're Roman boys all,
And boys of mettle. I must do that, captain,
This day, this very day—

Dec. What must you do, sir ?

Judas. I must do that my heart-strings yearn to do ;
But my word's past.

Dec. What is it ?

Judas. Why, kill Caratach.
That's all he asked us for our entertainment.

Dec. More than you'll pay.

Judas. 'Would I had sold myself

Unto the skin I had not promised it!

For such another Caratach—

Dec. Come, fool, Have you done your country service?

Judas. I've brought that To captain Junius—

Dec. How! Judas. I think will do all;

I cannot tell; I think so.

Dec. How! to Junius? I'll more enquire of this. You'll fight now?

Judas. But, hark you, captain! there is wine distributing;

I would fain know what share I have.

Dec. Begone; You have too much.

Judas. Captain, no wine, no fighting: There's one called Caratach that has wine.

Dec. You shall have wine, or any thing. Go file; Up with your men; I'll meet you presently; And get 'em sober quickly.

Judas. Arm, arm, bullies! All's right again and straight; and, which is more, More wine, more wine. Awake, ye men of Memphis! Be sober and discreet, we've much to do, boys.

[Exit.]

[Exeunt.]

ACT III. SCENE I.

Roman Camp. JUNIUS, CURIUS, and DECIUS enter.

Decius.

We dare not hazard it; beside our lives,
It forfeits all our understandings.

Jun. Gentlemen,
Can ye forsake me in so just a service,
A service for the commonwealth, for honour?
Read but the letter; you may love too.

Dec. Read it.
If there be any safety in the circumstance,
Or likelihood 'tis love, we will not fail you;
Read it, good Curius.

Cur. Willingly.

Jun. Now mark it.

Cur. [Reading.] ‘ Health to thy heart, my honoured Junius,

‘ And all thy love requited! I am thine,
‘ Thine everlastingly; thy love has won me;
‘ For I have purposed a delivery
‘ Both of myself and fortune this blessed day
‘ Into thy hands, if thou think’st good. To shew thee
‘ How infinite my love is, ev’n my mother
‘ Shall be thy prisoner, the day yours without hazard.
‘ Bring with thee, Junius,
‘ Spirits resolv’d to fetch me off. Just at the joining
‘ Of both the battles, we will be weakly guarded;
‘ And for a guide, within this hour, shall reach thee
‘ A faithful friend of mine. The gods, my Junius,
‘ Keep thee, and me to serve thee! Young Bonvica.’
This letter carries much belief.

Dec. Is that fellow
Come to you for a guide yet?

Jun. Yes.

Dec. And examin’d?

Jun. Far more than that; he has felt tortures, yet
He vows he knows no more than this truth.

Cur. If she mean

What she writes, as it may be probable,
'T will be the happiest vantage we can lean to.

Jun. I'll pawn my soul she means truth.

Dec. Think an hour more;

Then if your confidence grow stronger on you,
We'll set in with you.

Jun. Nobly done! I thank ye.
Ye know the time.

Cur. We will be either ready
To give you present counsel, or join with you.

Jun. No more, as ye are gentlemen. The general!

SUETONIUS, PETILLIUS, DEMETRIUS, and MACER enter.

Suet. Draw out apace; the enemy waits for us.
Are ye all ready?

Jun. All our troops attend, sir.

Suet. I'm glad to hear you say so, Junius;
I hope you're dispossess'd.

Jun. I hope so too, sir.

Suet. Continue so. And, gentlemen, to you now!
Go on in full assurance! draw your swords
As daring and as confident as justice!

The gods of Rome fight for ye; loud fame calls ye,
Pitched on the topless Apennine, where the snow dwells,
And blows to all the under-world, all nations,
The seas and unfrequented deserts; wakens
The ruin'd monuments; and there where nothing
But eternal death and sleep is, informs again
The dead bones with your virtues. Fight and conquer!
Up to your troops, and let your drums beat thunder;

March close and sudden, like a tempest. [March.] Keep
your phalanx,
And so march like a moving fort. Ere this day run,
We shall have ground to add to Rome, well won. [Exeunt.

SCENE II.

A Druid Temple. Music. Enter in solemnity the Druids singing; then BONDUCA, Daughters, CARATACH, NENNUS, and others.

SONG.

Hear us, great Ruguith, bear our prayers!
 Defend, defend thy British isle,
 Revive our hopes, disperse our fears,
 Nor let thy altars be the Roman spoil!
 Descend, ye powers divine, descend
 In chariots of ethereal flame,
 And touch the altars you defend!
 Oh, save our nation and our name!
 Hear us, ye gods of Britain, bear us this day:
 Let us not fall the Roman Eagle's prey!
 Clip, clip their wings, or chase them home,
 And check the tow'ring pride of Rome!

Bond. Ye powerful gods of Britain, hear our prayers!
 Rise from the dust, ye relicks of the dead,
 Whose noble deeds our holy Druids sing;
 Oh, rise, ye valiant bones! let not base earth
 Oppress your honours, whilst the pride of Rome
 Treads on your stocks, and wipes out all your stories!

1st Daugh. Thou, great Tiranes, whom our sacred priests,
 Armed with dreadful thunder, place on high
 Above the rest of the immortal gods,
 Send thy consuming fires and deadly bolts,
 And shoot 'em home; stick in each Roman heart

A fear fit for confusion ; blast their spirits,
Dwell in 'em to destruction ; through their phalanx
Strike, as thou strik'st a proud tree !

zd Daugb. Oh, thou god,
Thou feared god, if ever to thy justice
Insulting wrongs, and ravishments of women,
With virgin incense, have access, now hear me !
Now snatch thy thunder up, now on these Romans
Revenge thyself ; take to thy killing anger,
And utter rooting from this blessed isle,
Of what Rome is or has been ! Can ye be gods,
And these sins smother'd ?

Car. Cease your fretful prayers,
Your whinings, and your tame petitions !
The gods love courage : Hear how I salute 'em :
Divine Andate, thou who holdst the reins
Of furious battles, and disordered war,
Give us this day good hearts, good enemies,
Good blows o' both sides ; steel us both with angers
And warlike executions fit thy viewing ;
Let Rome put on her best strength, and thy Britain,
Thy little Britain, but as great in fortune,
Meet her as strong as she ! And who does best,
Reward with honour ; who despair makes fly,
Unarm for ever, and brand with infamy !
Grant this, divine Andate ! 'tis but justice :
And my first blow thus on thy holy altar
I sacrifice unto thee

Bond. It flames out.

Car. Now sing, ye Druids.

[*A flame arises.*

[*Music.*

DUET.

*To arms, to arms! your ensigns strait display :
Now, now, now, set the battle in array.*

*The oracle for war declares ;
Success depends upon our hearts and spears.*

CHORUS.

*Britons, strike home ! Revenge your country's wrongs :
Fight, and record yourselves in Druids' songs. [Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

Champaign Country. CARATACH and NENNUS enter.

A march.

Nen. The Roman is advanc'd; from yon' hill's brow
We may behold him, Caratach.

Car. Let's thither. [Drums within at one place afar off.
Suetonius is a soldier. See how bravely
The body moves, and in the head how proudly
The captains stick like plumes; he comes apace on.
Good Nennius, go, and bid my stout lieutenant
Bring on the first square body to oppose 'em,
And as he charges, open to inclose 'em;
The queen move next with hers, and wheel about,
To gain their backs, in which I'll lead the vanguard!
We shall have bloody crowns this day, I see by 't.
Haste thee, good Nennius! I hear our music,

[Exit Nennius. Drums in another place afar off.
And must attend it. Hold, good sword, but this day,
And bite hard where I hound thee! and hereafter

I'll make a relic of thee, for young soldiers
To come like pilgrims to, and kiss for conquests. [Exit.

Alarms. The two Daughters, with JUNIUS, CURIUS, DECIUS, Soldiers, and Servants enter.

2d Daugh. Bring 'em in;
Tie 'em, and then unarm them.

1st Daugh. Valiant Romans,
Ye're welcome to your loves!

2d Daugh. Your death, fools!
Dec. We deserve 'em;

And, women, do your worst!

CARATACHE enters.

Car. Where,
Where are these ladies? Ye keep noble quarter!
Your mother thinks you taken.—Sure these faces
I have beheld and known; they're Roman leaders!
How came they here?

2d Daugh. A trick, sir, that we used;
A certain policy conducted 'em
Unto our snare.

Car. Taken by treachery?
Catch'd up by craft?

2d Daugh. By any means that's lawful.

Car. A woman's wisdom in our triumphs? Out!
Out, out, ye follies! From our swords
Filch our revenges basely!—Arm again, gentlemen!
Soldiers, I charge you help 'em.

2d Daugh. By Heaven, uncle,
We will have vengeance!

Car. He that stirs to execute,
Or she, though it be yourselves,

Shall feel mine anger ! One great day given us,
And must we shame the gods from whence we have it,
With setting snares for soldiers ?
Give them their swords.

2d Daugb. Oh, gods !

Car. Bear off the women

Unto their mother !—Learn to spin, [*Exeunt Daughters.*
And curse your knotted hemp !—Go, gentlemen,
Safely go off, up to your troops ; be wiser :
There thank me like tall soldiers ; I shall seek ye. [*Exit.*

Cur. A noble worth !

Dec. Well, Junius ?

Jun. Pray ye, no more !

Cur. He blushes ; do not load him.

Dec. Where's your love now ?

Jun. Puff ! there it flies. Come, let's redeem our follies.
But see there, Curius, see. [*Drums loud again.*

See that huge battle moving from the mountains !

Their gilt coats shine like dragons' scales, their march
Like a rough tumbling storm ; say they fail, look,
Look where the armed carts stand ; a new army !

Look how they hang like falling rocks ! As murdering
Death rides in triumph, Curius, fell destruction
Lashes his fiery horse, and round about him
His many thousand ways to let out souls.

Let us to where they charge, and where the mountains
Melt under their hot wheels, and from their axle-trees
Huge claps of thunder plough the ground before 'em !
Come on ! charge ! follow me ! [*Exeunt.* . *Alarm.*

SUETONIUS, PETILLIUS, DEMETRIUS, and MACER enter.

Suet. Oh, bravely fought !
Honour, till now, ne'er shew'd her golden face

I' th' field : Like lions, gentlemen, you've held
Your heads up this day. Where's young Junius,
Curius, and Decius !

Pet. Gone to Heaven, I think, sir.

Suet. Their worths go with 'em ! Breathe a while. How
do ye ?

Pet. Well ; some few scurvy wounds ; my heart's whole
yet.

JUNIUS, DECIUS, and CURIUS enter.

Jun. Lead up to th' head, and line sure ! The queen's
battle

Begins to charge like wild-fire. Where's the general ?

Suet. Oh, they are living yet. Come, my brave soldiers,
Live, and lead armies all ! Ye bleed hard.

Jun. Best ;
We shall appear the sterner to the foe.

Dec. More wounds, more honour.

Pet. Lose no time. We'll grow to 't.
Is not this better now than lousy loving ?

Jun. I am myself, Petilius.

Pet. 'T is I love thee.

Suet. Away, then !

And stand this shock, ye've stood the world. [Exeunt.]

Alarm. BONDUCA, Daughters, and Britons enter.

Bond. Shame ! whither fly ye, Britons ? Back, ye cowards !
Leave your queen desolate ? her hapless children.

CARATACH and HENGO enter.

To Roman rape again, and fury ?

Car. Charge 'em i' th' flank !—Oh, you have play'd the
fool,

The woman fool ! Why did you give the word
 Unto the carts to charge down, and our people,
 In gross before the enemy ? We pay for't ;
 Our own swords cut our throats ! Get thee gone, woman !
 Shame tread upon thy heels ! All's lost, all's lost !

[*Loud shout within.*

Hark, how the Romans ring our knells !

Bond. Nay, cousin !

Car. Woman, away ! Shame tread upon thy heels !

[*Exeunt Bond. &c.*

Hengo. Good uncle,

Let me go too.

Car. No, boy ; thy fortune's mine ;
 I must not leave thee. Get behind me ; shake not !
 Thou might'st have been the heir to Britain's crown.
 Oh, woman ! oh, Bonduca ! what fell curses
 This day belong to thy improvidence !
 To Britain, by thy means, what sad millions
 Of widows' weeping eyes ! The strong man's valour
 Thou hast betray'd to fury, the child's fortune
 To fear, and want of friends ; whose pieties
 Might wipe his mournings off, and build his sorrows
 A house of rest by his bless'd ancestors :
 The land th' hast left a wilderness of wretches.—
 We must be gone, my boy ; but Heaven knows where ;
 For Britain now submits to Roman powers,
 And nothing but our lengths of earth are ours.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV. SCENE I.

The Roman Camp. PETILLIUS, JUNIUS, DECIUS, and DEMETRIUS enter.

Petillius.

OH, my vex'd thief, art thou come home again ?
Are thy brains perfect ?

Jun. Sound as bells,
Dead to all folly, and now my anger only——

Pet. Why, that's well said ; hang Cupid and his quiver !
When thou lov'st next love a good cup of wine,
A mistress for a king !

Jun. I am counsell'd ;
The war shall be my mistress now.

Pet. Well chosen !
For she's a bouncing lass ; she'll kiss thee at night, boy,
And break thy pate i' th' morning. She'll hold grappling,
And he that lays on best is her best servant ;
All other loves are mere trim laziness.
Here comes the general.

Suetonius, Curius, and Macer enter.

Suet. I'm glad I've found ye.
Haste, good Petillius, haste to Penius :
I fear the strong conceit of what disgrace
He's pull'd upon himself, will be his ruin ;
I would not lose him for all Britain.
Give him, Petillius, all the noblest counsel,
His fault forgiven too, his place, his honour ;
And tell the soldiers, 't was on our command
He drew not to the battle.

Pet. I conceive, sir,
And will do that shall cure all.

Suet. Bring him with you
Before the queen's fort, and his forces with him.
Make haste !

Pet. The best I may.

[Exit.]

Suet. And, noble gentlemen,
Up to your companies ! we'll presently
Upon the queen's pursuit. There's nothing done
Till she be seiz'd; without her, nothing won. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II.

The Tent of Penius. PENIUS, DRUSIUS, and PETILLIUS
enter.

Pen. Pray ye forsake me ;
Look not upon me, as ye love your honours !

Pet. Sure his mind's dangerous.

Drus. The good gods cure it !

Pen. My honour got through fire, through stubborn
breaches,
Through death himself, in all his horrid trims,
Is gone for ever, ever, ever, gentlemen !
Oh, my good sword, break from my side, and kill me ;
Cut out the coward from my heart !

Pet. You are none.

Pen. He lies that says so ! by Heaven, he lies, lies basely,
Baser than I have done ! Come, Justice, seek me ;
I've broke my fair obedience ! last, shame take me,
Shame, endless shame ! And pray do you forsake me !

Drus. What shall we do ?

Pen. Good gentlemen, forsake me !

See me, and understand me : This is he,
The gallant Penius that forsook the battle ;
This is the brave wise Penius ; this is he
Shrunk in his politic head, when Rome, like reapers,
Sweat blood and spirit for a glorious harvest,
And bound it up, and brought it off : that soldier,
That being courted by loud fame and fortune,
Yet durst doubt and be damn'd !

Pet. It was an error.

Pen. A foul one, and a black one.

Pet. Yet the blackest
May be wash'd white again. The general—

Pen. He's a brave gentleman,
A valiant, and a loving ; but examples
That nourish disobedience in whole armies,
Must not be play'd withal ;
Nor dare I hope more from him than is worthy.

Pet. What would you do ?

Pen. Die.

Pet. Fy, great captain ! you
A man to rule men, to have thousand lives
Under your regiment, and let your passion
Betray your reason ? I bring you all forgiveness,
The noblest kind commends, your place, your honour—

Pen. Pr'ythee no more ; 't is foolish. Good Petilius,
Tell me no more I may live.

Pet. 'T was my commission.

Pen. Farewell, captain !
Be a good man, and fight well ; be obedient ;
Command thyself, and then thy men,

Pet. Braye captain,
The great and honour'd Penius !

Pen. That again !
Oh, how it heightens me ! again, Petillius !

Pet. Most excellent commander !
Pen. Those were mine,
Mine, only mine !

Pet. They are still.
Pen. Then, to keep 'em

From ever falling more, have at ye ! Heavens,
Ye everlasting powers ! I'm yours ! [Stabs himself.]

Carry my last words

To the great general : Kiss his hands, and say,
My soul I give to Heaven, my fault to justice,
Which I have done upon myself ; my virtue,

If ever there was any in poor Penius,
Made more, and happier, light on him !—I faint :

And where there is a foe I wish him fortune.

I die : Lie lightly on my ashes, gentle earth ! [Dies.]

Pet. Farewell, great Penius ! [Noise within.]

REGULUS, with Soldiers enter.

Reg. Good soldiers—honest soldiers—

Pet. O, let 'em in ; all's done, all's ended, Regulus ;
Penius has found his last eclipse. Come, soldiers,
Come, and behold your miseries ; come sadly !
Who shall now lead you fortunate ? coy'd and courted
By all the mistresses of war, care, counsel,
Quick-ey'd experience, and victory twin'd to him ?
Go home, and hang your arms up ; let rust rot 'em ;
And humble your stern valours to soft prayers !
The sun that warm'd your bloods is set for ever.—
I'll kiss thy honour'd cheek. Farewell, great Penius,
Thou thunder-bolt, farewell !—Take up the body :

To-morrow, mourning, to the camp convey it,
There to receive due ceremonies. That eye
That blinds himself with weeping, gets most glory.

[*Exeunt with a dead march.*

SCENE III.

An Open Country. CARATACH and HENGO enter.

Car. How does my boy ?

Hengo. I would do well ; my heart's well ;
I do not fear.

Car. My good boy !

Hengo. I know, uncle,
We must all die : my little brother died ;
I saw him die, and he dy'd smiling ; sure
There's no great pain in 't, uncle. But pray tell me
Whither must we go when we are dead ?

Car. Why, to the blessed'st place, boy—Ever-sweetness
And happiness dwell there !

Hengo. Will you come to me ?

Car. Yes, my sweet boy.

Hengo. No Romans, uncle ?

Car. No, boy.

Hengo. I should be loth to meet them there.

Car. No ill men,

That live by violence and strong oppression,

Come thither ; 't is for those the gods love good men,

Hengo. Why, then I care not when I go, for surely
I am persuaded they love me : I never
Blasphem'd 'em, uncle, nor transgress'd my parents ;
I always said my prayers.

Car. That's my good boy !
Art thou not weary, Hengo ?

Hengo. Weary, uncle ?
I've heard you say you've march'd all day in armour.

Car. I have, boy. Thou art too tender.

Hengo. To go upon my legs ? They were made to bear me.
I can play twenty miles a-day ; I see no reason,
But, to preserve my country, and myself,
I should march forty.

Car. What wouldest thou be, living
To wear a man's strength !

Hengo. Why, a Caratach,
A Roman-hater, a scourge sent from Heaven
To whip those proud thieves from our kingdom.—Hark !

[Drums.]

Hark, uncle, hark ! I hear a drum.

JUDAS and his People enter to the door.

Judas. Beat softly,
Softly, I say ; they're here. Who dare charge ?

1st Sold. He
That dares be knock'd o' th' head : I'll not come near him.

Judas. Retire again, and watch then. How he stares !
H' has eyes would kill a dragon. Mark the boy well ;
If we could take or kill him—A pox on ye,
How fierce ye look ! See, how he broods the boy ?
The devil dwell's in's scabbard. Back, I say !

Apace, apace ! he'as found us. [They retire.]

Car. Do ye hunt us ?

Hengo. Uncle, good uncle, see ! the thin starv'd rascal,
The eating Roman, see where he thrids the thickets :
Kill him, dear uncle, kill him !

Car. Do ye make us foxes ?
Here, hold my charging-staff, and keep the place, boy !
I am at bay, and like a bull I'll bear me.
Stand, stand, ye rogues, ye squirrels ! [Exit.]

Hengo. Now he pays 'em ;
Oh, that I had a man's strength !

JUDAS, &c. enter.

Judas. Here's the boy ;
Mine own, I thank my fortune.

Hengo. Uncle, uncle !
Famine is fallen upon me, uncle.

Judas. Come, sir,
Yield willingly, (your uncle's out of hearing)
I'll tickle your young tail else.

Hengo. I defy thee,
Thou mock-made man of mat ! Charge home, sirrah !
Hang thee, base slave, thou shak'st !

Judas. Upon my conscience,
The boy will beat me !—Yield, or I cut thy head off.

Hengo. Thou dar'st not cut my finger : here 'tis ; touch it.

Judas. The boy speaks sword and buckler !—Pr'y thee
yield, boy ;
Come, here's an apple, yield.

Hengo. By Heaven, he fears me !
I'll give you sharper language : When, ye coward,
When come ye up ? I've twenty ways to charge thee.

Judas. Sure 'tis the devil, a dwarf devil in a doublet !

Two Soldiers enter, running.

1st Sold. Flee, flee ! he kills us.

2d Sold. He comes, he comes !

Judas. The devil take the hindmost ! [Exeunt Judas, &c.

Hengo. Run, run, ye rogues, ye precious rogues, ye rank
rogues !

A comes, a comes, a comes, a comes ! that's he, boys !
What a brave cry they make !

CARATACH enters, with a Roman's sword.

Car. How does my chicken ?

Hengo. 'Faith, uncle, grown a soldier, a great soldier ;
For, by the virtue of your charging-staff,
And a strange fighting face I put upon't,
I've out-brav'd Hunger.

Car. That's my boy, my sweet boy !
Here, here's a Roman's sword for thee.

Hengo. Good provision !
Before I starve, my sharp-edg'd blade of Rome,
I'll try your metal.

Car. A right complete soldier !
Come, chicken, let's go seek some place of rest ;
Thou wilt not else be able to endure
The journey to my country. Fruits and water
Must be your food awhile, boy.

Hengo. Any thing ;
I can eat moss, nay, I can live on anger,
To vex these Romans. Let's be wary, uncle.

Car. I warrant thee ; come, cheerfully.

Hengo. And boldly !

[*Exeunt.*

ACT V. SCENE I.

A Wood. CARATACH; HENGO by him, sleeping.

Caratach.

THUS we afflicted Britons fly for safeties,
And to avoid our dangers, seek destructions ;
Thus we awake to sorrows.
The boy begins to stir ; thy safety made,
'Would my soul were in Heaven !

Hengo. Oh, noble uncle,
Look out ! I dream'd we were betray'd.

Car. No harm, boy. [A soft dead march within.

Hengo. What are those.
(Look, uncle, look !) those multitudes that march there ?
They come upon us stealing by.

Car. I see 'em ;
And pr'ythee be not fearful.

Hengo. Now you hate me :
'Would I were dead !

Car. Thou know'st I love thee dearly.
Hengo. Did I e'er shrink yet, uncle ? Were I a man now,
I should be angry with you.

DRUSIUS, REGULUS, and Soldiers enter, with PENIUS's
Hearse ; Drums and Colours.

Car. My sweet chicken !
See, they approach us ; and, as it seems, they bear
Some soldier's body ; by their solemn gestures,
And sad solemnities, it well appears too
To be of eminence. We are, perhaps, unknown,
And may enquire.—Most worthy soldiers,
Let me entreat your knowledge to inform me
What noble body that is which you bear
With such a sad and ceremonious grief,
As if you meant to woo the world and nature
To be in love with death ?

Sold. It is the body
Of the great captain Penius, by himself
Made cold and spiritless.

Car. Penius, that generous foe ? Oh, stay, ye Romans !
The name of Penius is most dear to me,
To me his memory for ever sacred.

Stay, I conjure you, for a moment stay !
 By the religion which ye owe those gods
 That lead ye on to victories !

Drus. Stay.—

What's thy will, Briton ?

Car. But set down the body,
 The body of the noblest of all Romans ;
 That with your griefs an enemy may mingle,
 (A noble enemy, that loves a soldier)
 And lend a tear to virtue ! Ev'n your foes,
 Your wild foes, as you call'd us, are yet stor'd
 With fair affections, our hearts fresh, our spirits,
 Though sometimes stubborn, yet when virtue dies,
 Soft and relenting as a virgin's prayers :
 Oh, set it down !

Drus. Set down the body, soldiers.

Car. Thou hallowed relic, thou rich diamond
 Cut with thine own dust ; thou for whose wide fame
 The world appears too narrow ; thus I bow
 To thy most honour'd ashes ! Though an enemy,
 Yet friend to all thy worths, sleep peaceably !
 Happiness crown thy soul, and in thy earth
 Some laurel fix his seat, there grow and flourish,
 And make thy grave an everlasting triumph !
 Farewell all glorious wars, now thou art gone,
 And honest arms adieu ! All noble battles,
 Maintain'd in thirst of honour, not of blood,
 Farewell for ever !

Hengo. Was this Roman, uncle,
 So good a man ?

Car. Thou never knew'st thy father.

Hengo. He died 'fore I was born.

Car. This worthy Roman

Was such another piece of endless honour,
Such a brave soul dwelt in him ; their proportions
And faces were not much unlike, boy. Excellent nature !
See how it works into his eyes ! mine own boy !

Hengo. The multitudes of these men, and their fortunes,
Could never make me fear yet ; one man's goodness—

Car. Oh, now thou pleasest me ; weep still, my child,
As if thou saw'st me dead ! with such a flux
Or flood of sorrow, still thou pleasest me.
And worthy soldiers, pray receive these pledges,
These hatchments of our griefs, and grace us so much
To place 'em on his hearse. Now, if ye please,
Bear off the noble burden ;
And ever-loved, ever-living be
Thy honour'd and most sacred memory !

[*Exeunt. A dead march.*]

Car. Now dry thine eyes, my boy.

Hengo. Are they all gone ?
I could have wept this hour yet.

Car. Come, take cheer,
And raise thy spirit, child ; if but this day
Thou canst bear out thy faintness, the night coming
I'll fashion our escape.

Hengo. Pray, fear not me ;
Indeed I'm very hearty.

Car. Be so still ;
His mischiefs lessen, that controuls his ill. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

The Queen's Fort. Suetonius, Junius, Decius, Demetrius, Curius, and Soldiers enter: Bonduca, two Daughters, and Nennius above. Drum and Colours.

Suet. Bring up the catapults, and shake the wall;
We will not be out-braved thus.

Jun. See, sir,
See the Icenian queen in all her glory,
From the strong battlements proudly appearing
As if she meant to give us lashes!

Dec. Yield, queen.

Bond. I'm unacquainted with that language, Roman.
Bring up your catapults, and shake the earth,
You cannot shake our souls. Bring up your rams,
And with their armed heads make the fort totter,
Ye do but rock us into death.

Suet. Yield, honour'd lady, and expect our mercy;
You cannot 'scape our strength; you must yield, lady;
You must adore and fear the power of Rome.

Bond. If Rome be earthly, why should any knee
With bending adoration worship her?
She's vicious; and 'tis fitter I should reverence
The thatched houses where the Britons dwell
In careless mirth; where the bless'd household gods
See nought but chaste and simple purity.

Suet. Beat the wall deeper!

Bond. Beat it to the centre,
We will not sink one thought.

2d Daugb. Oh, mother, these are fearful hours; speak
gently
To these fierce men, they will afford ye pity.

Bond. Pity ! thou fearful girl ! Wouldst thou live less ?
Wast not thou born a princess ?
The lives of kings rest in their diadems,
And ceasing to be kings, they cease to live.
Shew such another fear, and, by the gods,
I'll fling thee to their fury.

Suet. Once more, mercy,
Mercy to all that yield !

Bond. I scorn to answer :
Speak to him, girl ; and, weak one, hear thy sister.

1st *Daugh.* General,
Hear me, and mark me well, and look upon me ;
See with thy narrowest eyes, thy sharpest wishes,
Into my soul, and see what there inhabits :
The children of as great as Rome, as noble,
Our names before her, and our deeds her envy,
Must we gild o'er your conquest ? swell your triumph ?
No, no, ye Romans, we have ways to 'scape ye,
To make ye curse our patience.
We 'll make our monuments in spite of fortune ;
In spite of all your eagles' wings, we 'll work
A pitch above ye ; and from our height we 'll stoop
As if we prey'd on heartless doves.

Suet. Decius, go charge the breach. [Exit Decius.

Bond. Charge it home, Roman ! —
Bring up the swords, and poison.

One with Swords and a great Cup enters.

Behold us, Romans !

Suet. Mercy yet.
Yield, and be a queen still, a mother, and a friend.

2d *Daugh.* Mercy, mother !

Bond. Oh, gods ! fear in my family ?
Take it, and nobly.

1st Daugh. Take it, worthy sister ;
 'Tis nothing ; 'tis a pleasure : We 'll go with you.
 2d Daugh. Oh, if I knew but whither !
 1st Daugh. To the blessed.
 2d Daugh. That steels me ;
 A long farewell to this world ! [Takes the cup.]

1st Daugh. The next is mine. Would ye learn
 How to die bravely, Romans, to fling off
 This case of flesh, lose all your cares for ever ?
 Live as we have done, well, and fear the gods ;
 So shall ye learn the noblest part to die.

Bond. Spoke like my daughter ! — Here, ye wretched Romans,

Here is a draught would ask no less than Cæsar
 To pledge it for the glory's sake !

Suet. Make up your own conditions.
 Stay ! Be any thing.

Bond. A saint, Suetonius,
 When thou shalt fear, and die a slave. Ye fools,
 Ye should have tied up death first, when ye conquer'd ;
 Ye toil for us in vain else : See him here ;
 He 's ours still, and our friend. I feel the poison. [Drinks.]
 Poor vanquish'd Romans, with what matchless tortures
 Could I now rack ye ! But I pity ye ;
 Nay, I will give ye counsel ere I die :
 If you will keep your laws and empire whole,
 Place in your Roman flesh a Briton's soul. [Scene closes.]

Suet. Desperate and strange !
 Are those come in yet, that pursued bold Caratach ?
Dem. Not yet, sir, for I think they mean to lodge him.
Suet. Draw out three companies,
 Yours, Curius, Junius, and thou, Demetrius,
 And make up instantly to Caratach ;
 He 's in the wood before you ; we shall follow,

DECIUS enters.

Well, Decius?

Decius. The fort is won, the Britons
Taken or put to the sword, the Queen Bonduca,
And both her daughters, self-destroy'd by poison.

Suet. Hapless Bonduca! give her fair funeral;
For she was truly noble, and a queen. [Flourish. Exeunt.

SCENE III.

Open Country. MACER and PETILLIUS meeting.

Pet. How now, Macer?
Is Judas yet come in?

JUDAS enters.

Macer. Yes, and has lost
Most of his men too. Here he is.

Pet. What news?

Judas. I've lodg'd him; rouse him, he that dares!

Pet. Where, Judas?

Judas. On a steep rock i'th' woods; the boy too with
him;
And there he swears he'll keep his Christmas, gentlemen,
But he will come away with full conditions,
Bravely, and like a Briton. He paid part of us;
Yet I think we fought bravely: For mine own part,
I was four several times at half-sword with him;
He's a mere devil, and no man. I' th' end, he swing'd us,
And swing'd us soundly too: He fights by witchcraft;
Yet for all that I saw him lodg'd.

Pet. Take more men,

And scout him round. Macer, march you along.
What victuals has he?

Judas. Not a piece of biscuit,
Not so much as will stop a tooth, nor water.
They lie just like a brace of bear-whelps, close and crafty,
Sucking their fingers for their food.

Pet. Cut off then
All hope of that way; take sufficient forces.
But use no foul play, on your lives! that man
That does him mischief by deceit, I'll kill him.

Macer. He shall have fair play; he deserves it.

Judas. Hark, ye!
What should I do there then? You are brave captains,
Most valiant men: Go up yourselves; use virtue;
See what will come on't; pray the gentleman
To come down and be taken. Ye all know him;
I think ye've felt him too: There ye shall find him,
His sword by's side, plumbs of a pound weight by him,
Will make your chops ache: You'll find it a more labour
To win him living, than climbing of a crow's nest.

Pet. Away, and compass him; we shall come up,
I'm sure, within these two hours. Watch him close.

Macer. He shall flee through the air if he escape us.

[*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE IV.

Changes, and discovers CARATACH and HENGO on a Rock.

Car. Sleep still, sleep sweetly, child; 'tis all thou feed'st
on! —

No gentle Briton near, no valiant charity,
To bring thee food? Poor knave, thou'rt sick, extremely
sick,

Almost grown wild for meat ; and yet thy goodness
Will not confess, nor shew it. All the woods
Are double lin'd with soldiers ; no way left us
To make a noble 'scape. I'll forage for thee,
And 'gainst thou wak'st, either get meat to save thee,
Or lose my life i' th' purchase. Good gods comfort thee !

[Disappears.]

MACER and JUDAS enter, with Meat and a Bottle.

Macer. Hang it o' th' side o' th' rock, as though the
Britons

Stole hither to relieve him : Who first ventures
To fetch it off, is ours. I cannot see him.

Judas. He lies close in a hole above, I know it,
Gnawing upon his anger. Ha ! no ; 'tis not he.

Macer. 'T is but the shaking of the boughs.

Judas. Pox shake 'em !
I'm sure they shake me soundly. There !

Macer. 'T is nothing.

Judas. Make no noise ; if he stir, a deadly tempest
Of huge stones falls upon's, 'T is done ! away, close !

CARATACH re-enters to HENGO on the Rock.

Car. Courage, my boy ! I have found meat.

Hengo. Oh, uncle,
My head swims, uncle ! methinks the rock goes round.

Car. 'T is but thy emptiness that breeds these fancies ;
Thou shalt have meat anon. Look, look, my Hengo,
Look where some blessed Briton, to preserve thee,
Has hung a little food and drink : cheer up, boy ;
Do not forsake me now !

Hengo. Uncle, I'm heart-whole, and would live.

Car. Thou shalt, long I hope.

Hengo. But my head, uncle!

MACER and JUDAS enter, below.

Do not you hear the noise of bells?

Car. Of bells, boy? 'Tis thy fancy;

Alas, thy body's full of wind.

Hengo. Methinks, sir,

They ring a strange sad knell, a preparation
To some near funeral of state. Oh, uncle,
I feel I cannot stay long; yet I'll fetch it,
To save your noble life. Nay, weep not, uncle,
Mine own sweet uncle! you will kill me sooner.

Car. Oh, my poor chicken!

Hengo. Fy, faint-hearted uncle!

Come, tie me in your belt, and let me down.

Car. I'll go myself, boy.

Hengo. No, as you love me, uncle!

I will not eat it, if I do not fetch it;

The danger only I desire: pray, tie me.

Car. I will, and all my care hang o'er thee! Come, child,
My valiant child!

Hengo. Let me down apace, uncle,
And you shall see how like a daw I'll whip it
From all their policies; for 'tis more certain
A Roman train: and you must hold me sure too,
You'll spoil all else. When I have brought it, uncle,
We'll be as merry——

Car. Go, i' th' name of Heaven, boy!

Hengo. Quick, quick, uncle! I have it.—Oh!

[Judas shoots Hengo with an arrow.

Car. What ail'st thou?

Hengo. Oh, my best uncle, I am slain!

Car. I see you, [Car. kills Judas with a stone.
And Heaven direct my hand! Destruction
Go with thy coward soul!—How dost thou, boy!—

[Draws him up.

Hengo. Oh, I bleed hard; I faint too; out upon 't,
How sick I am!—The lean rogue, uncle!

Car. Look, boy;
I've laid him sure enough.

Hengo. Have you knock'd his brains out?

Car. I warrant thee for stirring more. Cheer up, child.

Hengo. Hold my sides hard, still I grow sicker, uncle!

Car. Heaven look upon this noble child!

Hengo. I once hoped—I should have lived to have met these bloody Romans,
To have beaten 'em. Oh, hold me hard! But, uncle—

Car. Thou shalt live still, I hope, boy. Shall I draw it?

Hengo. You draw away my soul then; I would live
A little longer, (spare me, Heavens!) but only
To thank you for your tender love! Good uncle,
Good noble uncle, weep not!

Car. Oh, my chicken,
My dear boy, what shall I lose!

Hengo. Why, a child,
That must have died however; had this 'scap'd me,
Fever or famine—I was born to die, sir.

Car. But thus unblown, my boy—

Hengo. I go the straighter
My journey to the gods. Sure I shall know you
When you come, uncle?

Car. Yes, boy.

Hengo. And I hope
We shall enjoy together that great blessedness
You told me of.

Car. Most certain, child.

Hengo. I grow cold ;
Mine eyes are going.

Car. Lift 'em up !

Hengo. Pray for me ;
And, noble uncle, when my bones are ashes,
Think of your little nephew ! Mercy !

Car. Mercy !

You blessed angels, take him !

Hengo. Kiss me ! so.
Farewell, farewell !

[Dies.]

Car. Farewell the hopes of Britain !
Thou royal graft, farewell for ever !—Time and death,
Ye 've done your worst. Fortune, now see, now proudly
Look what th' hast brought this land to. Oh, fair flower,
How lovely yet thy ruins shew, how sweetly
Ev'n Death embraces thee ! The peace of Heaven,
The fellowship of all great souls, be with thee !

PETILLIUS and JUNIUS appear on the Rock.

Ha ! dare ye, Romans ? Ye shall win me bravely,
Come, come up all, with all your ancient valours ;
Like a rough wind I'll shake your souls, and send 'em—

SUETONIUS, and all the Roman Captains, enter.

Suet. Yield thee, bold Caratach ! By all the gods,
As I am a soldier, as I envy thee,
I 'll use thee like thyself, the valiant Briton.

Car. Oh, Romans, see what here is ! Had this boy liv'd—

Suet. Excellent Briton, do me but that honour,
That more to me than conquests, that true happiness,
To be my friend ! For Fame's sake, for thy sword's sake !
By all that 's excellent in man, and honest—

Car. I do believe. Ye've had me a brave foe ;
Make me a noble friend, and from your goodness,
Give this boy honourable earth to lie in !

Suet. He shall have fitting funeral.

Car. I yield then ;
Not to your blows, but this last courtesy.

Pet. Thus we conduct then to the arms of Peace
The wonder of the world ! [They bring him down.

Suet. Thus I embrace thee ; [Flourish.
And let it be no flatt'ry that I tell thee,
Thou art the only soldier !

Car. How to thank ye,
I must hereafter find upon your usage.
I am for Rome ?

Suet. You must.

Car. Then Rome shall know
The firmness of a Briton's soul ; shall know
Britons can brave the chance of war : If Fortune
Smile on their arms, they spare the vanquish'd foe ;
Vanquished themselves, in naked majesty,
Like their own knotted oak by thunder blasted,
Nobly they stand the tempest of their fate.
Now, Roman, I am thine. Set on ! I follow.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

THE END.

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Jung Ant

ZENOBIA.

A

TRAGEDY,

BY ARTHUR MURPHY, ESQ.

ADAPTED FOR

THEATRICAL REPRESENTATION,

AS PERFORMED AT

THE THEATRE-ROYAL, DRURY LANE.

REGULATED FROM THE PROMPT-BOOK,

By Permission of the Manager.

The Lines distinguished by inverted Commas, are omitted in the Representation; and those printed in Italics are the Additions of the Theatre.

LONDON:

Printed for, and under the Direction of,
GEORGE CAWTHORN, British Library, STRAND.

M DCC XCVI.



TO
MRS. DANCER.

MADAM,

IN a country, where addresses of this nature have generally waited upon the great, upon a wealthy merchant, a rich commissary, or some new man from the sugar islands, it will appear as surprizing to many, as, no doubt, it will to yourself, that a new form of dedication should now be introduced. For the trouble I am giving you it will, however, be unnecessary to make any further apology, when I observe that in France, where talents are honoured, it has been frequently the practice of the most celebrated wits to do justice to those, who, by their profession, are the very organ of the Muses. A Voltaire and a Marmontel have paid their compliments to a Clairon: and why may not an English author, inferior as he is, and ever must be, to writers of that class, rival at least their politeness; by addressing himself to Mrs. DANCER, one of the first ornaments of the British Theatre?

There are, indeed, I must confess it, some demands upon my gratitude on this occasion, which even now are struggling to call my attention another way.---Mr. GARRICK, madam, has a claim to all the handsome things that can be said of him. His politeness, from the moment he saw the play, his assiduity in preparing it for representation, the taste with which he has decorated it, and the warmth of his zeal for the honour of the piece, are circumstances that call upon me for the strongest acknowledgments. I could employ my pen with pleasure in thanking Mr. BARRY for the very fine exertion of his powers, wherever the Poet gave the smallest opportunity.---Mr. HOLLAND, who had before now given spirit to such scenes as mine, has renewed the obligation. I could add others to the list, but they, and even Mr. GARRICK at their head, must excuse me, if I turn to Mrs. DANCER, and say with Hamlet, ‘Here’s metal more attractive.’

Zenobia, madam, is your own entirely. Wherever my inaccuracy has left imperfections, they are so happily varnished over by your skill, that either they are not seen, or you extort forgiveness for them: and if the author is anywhere lucky enough to snatch a grace beyond his usual reach, it is multiplied by your address into a number of beauties, like the Sword in Tasso's Jerusalem, which, when brandished by the hand of Rinaldo, appears to the whole army to be three swords.

The fate of ZENOBIA has been very extraordinary. She was saved in her life-time from the waters of the Araxes by the hand of a shepherd, and now she is saved from the critics by MRS. DANCER.

In testimony of the fact, the play, madam, is inscribed to you by him, who admires your talents, and remains,

Your most obedient servant,

THE AUTHOR.

March 3, 1768.

PROLOGUE.

Spoken by Mr. HOLLAND.

*Of old, when Rome in a declining age
Of lawless power had felt the barb'rous rage,
This was the tyrant's art—He gave a prize
To him, who a new pleasure should devise.*

*Ye tyrants of the Pit, whose cold disdain
Rejects and nauseates the repeated strain ;
Who call for rarities to quicken sense,
Say, do you always the reward dispense,*

*Ye bards, to whom French wit gives kind relief,
Are ye not oft the first—to cry, STOP THIEF !
Say, to a brother, do you ere allow,
One little sprig, one leaf to deck his brow ?
No ;—fierce invective stuns the play-wright's ears,
Wits, Poet's corner, Ledgers, Gazetteers ?
'Tis said, the Tartar, ere he pierce the heart,
Inscribes his name upon his poison'd dart.
That scheme's rejected by each scribbling spark ;
Our Christian system—stabs you in the dark.*

*And yet the desp'rate author of to-night
Dares on the muses wing another flight ;
Once more a dupe to fame forsakes his ease,
And feels the ambition—here again to please.*

*He brings a tale from a far distant age,
Ennobled by the grave historic page !**
*Zenobia's woes have touch'd each polish'd state ;
The brightest eyes of France have mourn'd her fate.
Harmonious Italy her tribute paid,
And sung a dirge to her lamented shade.*

*Yet think not that we mean to mock the eye
With pilfer'd colours of a foreign dye.
Not to translate, our bard his pen doth dip ;
He takes a play, as Britons take a ship ;
They heave her down s with many a sturdy stroke,
Repair her well, and build with heart of oak.
To every breeze set Britain's streamers free,
NEW-MAN her, and away again to sea.*

*This is our author's aim ; and if his art
Waken to sentiment the feeling heart ;
If in his scenes alternate passions burn,
And friendship, love, guilt, virtue take their turn ;
If innocence oppress'd lie bleeding here,
You'll give—'tis all he asks—one VIRTUOUS TEAR.*

* Tacitus Ann. Lib. 12. Sect. 44. to end of 51.

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Dramatis Personar.

COVENT-GARDEN.

Men.

PHARASMANES,	- - -	Mr. Aickin.
RHADAMISTUS,	- - -	Mr. Barry.
TERIBAZUS,	- - -	Mr. Holland.
ZOPIRON,	- - -	Mr. Packer.
TIGRANES,	- - -	Mr. Hurst.
MEGISTUS,	- - -	Mr. Havard.

Women.

ZENOBLA,	- - -	Mrs. Dancer.
ZELMIRA,	- - -	Mrs. Barry.

Attendants, Guards, &c.

SCENE lies in Pharasmanes' Camp, on the Banks of the
Araxes.

7 JU 52

Aet V.

ZENOBIA.

Sc II.



Brake del.

Lony ex.

MISS GOUGH as ZENOBIA.

*Poor tyrant you will die the stroke of death if
I find I inflict it—*

London Printed for G. Cawthron British Library Strand. M^{rs}. 8.



Baig del. *London.* Printed for G. Cawthron British Library, Strand. M^o 2. 2s. *Flecker's.*

7 JU 52



ZENOBLA.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Zelmira.

THRO' the wide camp 'tis awful solitude !
On every tent, which at the morning's dawn
Rung with the din of arms, deep silence sits
Adding new terrors to the dreadful scene !
My heart dies in me !—hark ! with hideous roar
The turbulent Araxes foams along,
And rolls his torrent through yon depth of woods !
'T is terrible to hear !—who's there ?—Zopiron !

Zopiron enters.

My lord ; my husband !—help me ; lend your aid !

Zop. Why didst thou leave thy tent ?—why thus afflict
Thy anxious breast, thou partner of my heart ?
Why wilt thou thus distract thy tender nature
With groundless fears—ere yonder sun shall visit
The western sky, all will be hush'd to peace.

Zel. The interval is horrid, big with woe,
With consternation, peril and dismay !
And oh ! if here, while yet the fate of nations
Suspended hangs upon the doubtful sword,
If here the trembling heart thus shrink with horror,

Here in these tents, in this unpeopled camp,
Oh! think, Zopiron, in yon field of death
Where numbers soon in purple heaps shall bleed,
What feelings there must throb in every breast?
How long, ambition, wilt thou stalk the earth
And thus lay waste mankind?—

Zop. This day at length
The warlike king, victorious Pharasmanes
Closes the scene of war.—The Roman bands
But ill can cope with the embattled numbers
Asia pours forth, a firm, undaunted host!
A nation under arms!—and every bosom
To deeds of glory fir'd!—Iberia then—

Zel. Perish Iberia!—may the sons of Rome
Pour rapid vengeance on her falling ranks,
That he, who tramples on the rights of nature,
May see his vassals overwhelm'd in ruin,
May from yon field be led in sullen chains,
To grace the triumph of imperial Rome,
And from th' assembled senate humbly learn
The dictates of humanity and justice!

Zop. Thy generous zeal, thy every sentiment
Charms my delighted soul.—But thou be cautious,
And check the rising ardor that inflames thee.
The tyrant spares nor sex, nor innocence—

Zel. Indignant of controul, he spurns each law,
Each holy sanction, that restrains the nations,
And forms 'twixt man and man the bond of peace.

Zop. This is the tyger's den; with human gore
For ever floats the pavement; with the shrieks
Of matrons weeping o'er their slaughter'd sons,
The cries of virgins to the brutal arms
Of violation dragged, with ceaseless groans

Of varied misery for ever rings
The dreary region of his curs'd domain.

Zel. To multiply his crimes, a beauteous captive,
Th' afflicted Ariana—she—for her,
For that fair excellence my bosom bleeds !
She, in the prime of ev'ry blooming grace,
When next the glowing hour of riot comes
Shall fall a victim to his base desires——

Zop. The bounteous gods may succour virtue still !
In this day's battle, which perhaps e'er now
The charging hosts have join'd, should Roman valour
Prevail o'er Asia's numbers.——

Zel. That event
Is all our hope.——And lo ! on yonder rampart
Trembling with wild anxiety she stands,
Invokes each god, and bids her straining eye
Explore the distant field.——

Zop. Yes, there she's fix'd
A statue of despair !——That tender bosom
Heaves with no common grief—I've mark'd her oft,
And if I read aright, some mighty cause
Of hoarded anguish, some peculiar woe
Preys on her mind unseen !—But, ha ! behold,
She faints ; her fears too powerful for her frame
Sink that frail beauty drooping to the earth. [Exit hastily.]

Zel. Haste, fly, Zopiron, fly with instant succour ;
Support her ; help her ;——Lo ! the attendant train
Have caught her in their arms !—assist her, Heaven,
Assuage the sorrows of that gentle spirit !
Her fluttering sense returns ;—and now this way
The virgins lead her.—May the avenging gods !
In pity of the woes such virtue feels,
In pity of the wrongs a world endures,

With power resistless arm the Roman legions,
That they may hurl in one collected blow
Assur'd destruction on the tyrant's head! —————

ZENOBIA enters, leaning on two Attendants.

Zen. A little onward, still a little onward
Support my steps —————

Zel. How fares it, madam, now?

Zen. My strength returns—I thank you, generous maids,
And would I could requite you—fruitless thanks
Are all a wretch can give. —————

1st Atten. The gentle office
Of mild benevolence our nature prompts —————
Your merit too commands :—on Ariana
We ten^c with willing, with delighted care,
And that delight o'er pays us for our trouble.

Zen. Your cares for me denote a heart that feels
For others woes.—Methinks with strength renew'd
I could adventure forth again. —————

2d Atten. 'T were best
Repose your wearied spirits—we will seek
Yon rising ground, and bring the swiftest tidings
Of all the mingled tumult.

Zen. Go, my virgins ;
Watch well each movement of the marshall'd field ;
Each turn of fortune ; let me know it all ; —————
Each varying circumstance. —————

Zel. And will you thus,
Be doom'd for ever, Ariana, thus
A willing prey to visionary ills
The self-consuming votarist of care ?

Zen. Alas! I'm doom'd to weep—the wrath of Heaven
With inexhausted vengeance follows still,

And each day comes with aggravated woes.

Zel. Yet when Iberia's king, when Pharasmanes,
With all a lover's fondness——

Zen. Name him not !

Name not a monster horrible with blood,
The widows, orphans, and the virgin's tears !

Zel. Yet, savage as he is, at sight of thee
Each fiercer passion softens into love,
To you he bends ; the monarch of the east
Dejected droops beneath your cold disdain,
And all the tyranny of female pride.

Zen. That pride is virtue ; virtue that abhors
The tyrant reeking from a brother's murder !

Oh ! Mithridates ! ever honour'd shade !

—Peaceful he reign'd, dispensing good around him,
In the mild eve of honourable days ! —

Through all her peopled realm Amenia felt
His equal sway ;—the sunset of his power
With fainter beams, but undiminished glory,
Still shone serene, while ev'ry conscious subject
With tears of praise beheld his calm decline,
And bless'd the parting ray !—yet then, Zelmira,

Oh ! fact accrue'd ! yes Pharasmanes then,

Detested perfidy !—nor ties of blood,

Nor sacred laws, nor the just gods restrain him ;

In the dead midnight hour the fell assassin

Rush'd on the slumber of the virtuous man ;

His life-blood gush'd ; the venerable king

Wak'd, saw a brother arm'd against his life,

—Forgave him and expir'd !

Zel. Yet wherefore open

Afresh the wounds, which time long since hath clos'd ?

—This Day confirms his sceptre in his hand.

Zen. Confirms his sceptre—his!—indignant gods,
Will no red vengeance from your stores of wrath
Burst down to crush the tyrant in his guilt?
His sceptre, saidst thou?—urge that word no more—
The sceptre of his son!—the solemn right
Of Rhadamistus!—Mithridates' choice,
That call'd him to his daughter's nuptial bed,
Approv'd him lineal heir;—consenting nobles,
The public will, the sanction of the laws,
All ratified his claim;—yet, curs'd ambition,
Deaf to a nation's voice, a nation's charter,
Nor satisfied to fill Iberia's throne,
Made war, unnatural war, against a son,
Usurp'd his crown, and with remorseless rage
Pursued his life.

Zel. Can Ariana plead
For such a son?—means she to varnish o'er
The guilt of Rhadamistus?

Zen. Guilt, Zelmira!

Zel. Guilt that shoots horror through my aching heart!—
Poor lost Zenobia!

Zen. And do her misfortunes
Awaken tender pity in your breast?

Zel. Ill-fated princess! in her vernal bloom
By a false husband murder'd!—from the stem
A rose-bud torn, and in some desert cave
Thrown by to moulder into silent dust!—

Zen. You knew not Rhadamistus!—Pharasmanes
Knew not the early virtues of his son.
As yet an infant in his tend'rest years
His father sent him to Armenia's court,
That Mithridates' care might form his mind
To arts, to wisdom, and to manners worthy

Armenia's sceptre, and Zenobia's love.
The world delighted saw each dawning virtue,
Each nameless grace to full perfection rising! —
Oh! he was all the fondest maid could wish,
All truth, all honour, tenderness and love!
Yet from his empire thrown! with merciless fury
His father following, slaughter raging round,
What could the hero in that dire extreme?

Zel. Those strong impassion'd looks!—Some fatal secret
Works in her heart, and melts her into tears. [Aside.

Zen. Driven to the margin of Araxes' flood,
No means of flight, aghast he look'd round —
Wild throbb'd his bosom with conflicting passions,
And must I then? tears gush'd and choak'd his voice,
And must I leave thee then, Zenobia? must
Thy beauteous form—he paus'd, then aim'd a poinard
At his great heart—but oh! I rush'd upon him,
And with these arms close-wreathing round his neck,
With all the vehemence of prayers and shrieks,
Implor'd the only boon he then could grant
To perish with him in a fond embrace.
The foe drew near—time press'd, no way was left—
He clasp'd me to his heart—together both,
Lock'd in the folds of love, we plung'd at once
And sought a requiem in the roaring flood.

Zel. This wondrous tale—this sudden burst of passion—

Zen. Ha!—whither has my frenzy led me?—hark!
That sound of triumph!—lost, for ever lost!
Ruin'd Armenia—Oh! devoted race!

[A flourish of trumpets.

TIGRANES, Soldiers, and some Prisoners, enter.

Zen. Thy looks, Tigranes, indicate thy purpose!

The armies met, and Pharasmanes conquer'd ;
Is it not so ?

Tig. As yet with pent up fury
The soldier pants to let destruction loose.
With eager speed we urg'd our rapid march,
To where the Romans tented in the vale
With cold delay protract the ling'ring war.
At our approach their scanty numbers form'd
Their feeble lines, the future prey of vengeance.

Zen. And wherefore, when thy sword demands its share
Of havock in that scene of blood and horror,
Wherefore return'st thou to this lonely camp ?

Tig. With cautious eye as I explor'd the forest,
Which rises thick near yonder ridge of mountains,
And stretches o'er the interminable plain,
I saw these captives in the gloomy wood,
Seeking with silent march the Roman camp.
Impal'd alive 't is Pharasmanes' will
They suffer death in misery of torment.

Zen. Unhappy men ! ---and must they---ha ! ---that face,
That aged mien ! ---that venerable form ! ---
Immortal powers ! ---is it my more than father ? ---
Is that Megistus ? ---

Meg. Ariana here !
Gods ! could I ever hope to see her more ?
Thou virtuous maid ! ---thou darling of my age ! ---

Zen. It is—it is Megistus ! ---once again
Thus let me fall and clasp his rev'rend knee,
Print the warm kiss of gratitude and love
Upon this trembling hand, and pour the tears,
The mingled tears of wonder and of joy.

Meg. Rise, Ariana, rise—almighty gods !
The tide of joy and transport pours too fast

Along these wither'd veins—it is too much
For a poor weak old man, worn out with grief,
And palsied age—it is too much to bear!
Oh! Ariana—daughter of affliction,
Have I then found thee?—do I thus behold thee!—
Now I can die content!—

Zen. Thou best of men!
These joys, our tears, and looks can only speak.—

Meg. Yet, they are cruel joys---mysterious heaven!
You bid the storm o'er cast our darksome ways;
You gild the cloud with gleams of cheering light;
Then comes a breath from you and all is vanish'd;

Zen. Wherefore dejected thus—

Meg. Alas! to meet thee
But for a moment, and then part for ever!
To meet thee here, only to grieve thee more,
To add to thy afflictions,—wound that bosom
Where mild affection, where each virtue dwells,
Just to behold thee, and then close my eyes
In endless night, while you survey my pangs
In the approaching agony of torment—

Zen. Talk not of agony;—'t is rapture all!
And who has power to tear thee from my heart?

Meg. Alas! the charge of vile imputed guilt—
Zen. I know thy truth, thy pure exalted mind---
Thy sense of noble deeds---imputed guilt;
Oh! none will dare---hast thou, Tigranes? what,
What is his crime? blush, foul traducer, blush!
Oh! [To Megistus] the wide world must own thy every
virtue.—

Tig. If in the conscious forest I beheld
Their dark complottings—

Zen. Peace, vile sland'r'er, peace !
 Thou know'st who captivates a monarch's heart—
 'T is I protect him---Ariana does it —
 Thou, venerable man ! in my pavilion
 I'll lodge thee safe from danger—oh ! this joy,
 This best supreme delight the gods have sent,
 In pity for whole years of countless woe.

[Exit with Megistus.

ZELMIRA enters.

Tig. With what wild fury her conflicting passions
 Rise to a storm, a tempest of the soul !
 I know the latent cause---her heart revolts,
 And leagues in secret with the Roman arms.

Zel. Beware, Tigranes!---that excess of joy,
 Those quick, those varied passions strongly speak
 The stranger has an int'rest in her heart.
 Besides, thou know't o'er Pharasmanes' will
 She holds supreme dominion—

Tig. True, she rules him
 With boundless sway—

Zel. Nay, more to wake thy fears—
 The youthful prince, the valiant Teribazus
 In secret sighs, and feels the ray of beauty
 Through ev'ry sense soft-thrilling to his heart.
 He too becomes thy foe.

Tig. Unguarded man !
 Whate'er he loves or hates, with gen'rous warmth,
 As nature prompts, that dares he to avow,
 And lets each passion stand confess'd to view ;
 Such too is Ariana; bold and open
 She kindly gives instructions to her foe,
 To marr her best designs.

Zel. Her foe, Tigranes !
That lovely form inshrines the gentlest virtues,
Softest compassion, unaffected wisdom,
To outward beauty lending higher charms
Adorning and adorn'd !—The gen'rous prince—
He too—full well thou know'st him—he unites
In the heroic mould of manly firmness,
Each mild attractive art—oh ! surely none
Envy the fair renown that's earn'd by virtue.

Tig. None should, Zelmira !—ha ! those warlike notes !

TERIBAZUS enters.

Ter. Each weary soldier rest upon his arms,
And wait the king's return—Zelmira, say,
In these dark moments of impending horror,
How fares thy beauteous friend ?—her tender spirit
But ill supports the fierce alarms of war.

ZENOBIA enters.

Zen. Where is he?—let me fly—oh ! Pharasmanes—
Methought those sounds bespoke the king's approach—
Oh ! Teribazus, tell me—have the fates—
This horrible suspense—

Ter. I came, bright maid,
To hush the wild emotions of thy heart.
Devouring slaughter for a while suspends
Its ruthless rage; as either host advanc'd
In dread array, and from the burnish'd arms
Of Asia's ranks redoubled sun-beams play'd
Burning with bright diversities of day,
Came forth an herald from the Roman camp
With proferr'd terms—my father deign'd for once
To yield to mild persuasion—in his tent

Th' ambassador of Rome will soon attend him
To sheath the sword, and give the nations peace.

Zen. But oh ! no peace for me, misfortune's heir !
The wretched heir of misery !—But now
A more than father found,—yet cruel men
Would tear him from me—gen'rous, gen'rous prince,
Spare an old man, whose head is white with age,
Nor let 'em wound me with the sharpest pang
That ever tortur'd a poor bleeding heart.

Ter. Arise, my fair ; let not a storm of grief
Thus bend to earth my Ariana's beauties ;
Soon shall they all revive.—

Zen. They brought him fetter'd,
Bound like a murderer !—Tigranes, he,
This is the author of the horrid charge—
He threatens instant death—but oh ! protect,
Protect an innocent, a good old man,—
Or stretch me with him on the mournful bier.

Ter. By Heaven, whoe'er he is, since dear to you,
He shall not suffer—quick, direct me to him—
My guards shall safe inclose him.

Zen. In my pavilion
He waits his doom.

Ter. Myself will bear the tidings
Of life, of joy, and liberty restor'd.
And thou, artificer of ill, thou false,
Thou vile defamer !—leave thy treach'rous arts,
Nor dare accuse whom Ariana loves.

[Exit.]

ZELMIRA enters.

Zen. Zelmira, this is happiness supreme !
Oh ! to have met with unexampl'd goodness,
To owe my all, my very life itself,

To an unknown, but hospitable hand,
And thus enabled by the bounteous gods,
To pay the vast, vast debt—'t is ecstasy
That swells above all bounds, till the fond heart
Ache with delight, and thus run o'er in tears.

Zel. What must Zelmira think?—at first your tongue
Grew lavish in the praise of Rhadamistus,
With hints obscure, touching your high descent;
And now this hoary sage—is he your father?
My mind is lost in wonder and in doubt.

Zen. Then to dispel thy doubts, and tell at once
What deep reserve has hid within my heart,
I am Zenobia—I that ill-starr'd wretch!
The daughter of a scepter'd ancestry,
And now the slave of Mithridates' brother!

Zel. Long lost Zenobia, and restor'd at length!
I am your subject; oh! my queen, my sovereign!

Zen. Thou gen'rous friend! Rise, my Zelmira, rise.
That good old man! oh! it was he beheld me
Borne far away from Rhadamistus' arms,
Just perishing, just lost!—
He dash'd into the flood, redeem'd me thence,
And brought me back to life. My op'ning eyes
Just saw the light, and clos'd again to shun it.
Each vital power was sunk; but he, well skill'd
In potent herbs, recall'd my fluttering soul.

Zel. May the propitious gods reward his care.

Zen. With me he sav'd a dear, a precious boy!
Then in the womb conceal'd; he sav'd my child,
To trace his father's lov'd resemblance to me,
The dear, dear offspring of our bridal loves.

Zel. Oh! blessings on him, blessings on his head!—

Zen. Resign'd and patient I since dwelt with him

Far in the mazes of a winding wood,
 Midst hoary mountains, and deep cavern'd rocks.
 But, oh ! the fond idea of my lord
 Pursued me still, or in the cavern'd rock,
 The mountain's brow, and pendant forest's gloom.
 The sun look'd joyless down ; each lonely night
 Heard my griefs echoing thro' the woodland shade.
 My infant Rhadamistus ! he is lost,
 He too is wrested from me ! 'midst the rage
 And the wide waste of war, the hell-hound troops
 Of Pharasmanes sought my lone retreat,
 And from the violated shades, from all
 My soul held dear, the barb'rous ruffians tore me,
 And never shall the wretched mother see
 Her child again ! —

Zel. Heaven may restore him still,
 May still restore your royal husband too —
 Who knows but some protecting god —

Zen. No god !
 No guardian power was present ! he is lost ! —
 Oh ! Rhadamistus ! —oh ! my honour'd lord !
 No pitying eye beheld thy decent form ;
 The rolling flood devour'd thee ! — thou hast found
 A watery grave, and the last dismal accents
 That trembling on thy tongue, came bubbling up,
 And murmur'd lost Zenobia !

Zel. Yet be calm.
 The gods may bring redress ; even now they give
 To misery like thine, the heartfelt joy
 Of shielding injur'd virtue.

Zen. Yes, Zelmira,
 That pure delight is mine, a ray from Heaven
 That bids affliction smile — All gracious powers !

Make me your agent here to save Megistus ;
 I 'll bear the load of life, bear all its ills—
 Till you shall bid this sad world-weary spirit
 To peaceful regions wing her happy flight,
 And seek my lord in the dark realms of night ;
 Seek his dear shade in every pensive grove,
 And bear him all my constancy and love. [Exeunt.]

*ACT II. SCENE I.**Tigranes alone.**Tigranes.*

A FALSE accuser deem'd !—artificer of fraud !
 Those words, intemp'rate boy !—thy phrensy too
 Deluded fair ! shall cost you dear atonement.
 Yet till occasion rise—the king approaches.

[Grand warlike music.]

A Military Procession PHARASMANES, &c. enter.

Pbar. At length the fame of Pharasmanes' arms
 Hath aw'd the nations round—Rome shrinks aghast
 With pale dismay, recalls her trembling legions,
 And deprecates the war—Oh ! what a scene
 Of glorious havoc had yon field beheld,
 If peaceful counsels had not check'd my fury !
 Valiant Tigranes, those rebellious slaves,
 Thy care detected—have they suffer'd death ?

Tig. Your pardon, sir—their doom as yet suspended—
 The generous prince—I would not utter aught
 Should injure Teribazus—

Pbar. Ha !—proceed,
 And give me all the truth—

Tig. By his command—
His tender nature deem'd it barb'rous rigour
To urge their sentence.
Pbar. Vain, aspiring boy !
Tell Teribazus—

ZENOBIA enters.

Fell th' unthinking prince,
The rash presumptuous stripling ! these his arts,
These practices of popular demeanour,
Are treason to his father—let him know
Thro' wide Armenia and Iberia's realm
My will is fate—the slaves shall meet their doom.

Zen. Oh, mighty king, thus bending lowly down,
An humble suppliant—

Pbar. Ariana here !
Thou beauteous mourner, let no care molest
Thy tender bosom ; rise, and bid thy charms
Beam forth thy gentlest lustre to adorn
The glories of my triumph.

Zen. Oh ! a wretch like me
It best befits, thus grovelling on the earth
To bathe your feet with tears.

Pbar. It must not be— [He raises her.
By Heaven, renown in arms in vain attends me,
If the lov'd graces of thy matchless form
Are thus depress'd and languish in affliction,
Like flow'rs that droop and hang their pining heads
Beneath the rigour of relentless skies.

Zen. If thou wouldst raise me from the depths of woe,
Forgive those captives, whom thy fatal anger
Adjudg'd to death, nor let ill-tim'd resentment
Fall on the prince, your son ; 't was I—my tears—

My piercing lamentations won his heart
To arrest their doom—

Pbar. For traitors to my crown
Does Ariana plead ?

Zen. For mild humanity
My suppliant voice is rais'd—I point the means
To add new glory to your fame and arms.
In nought so near can men approach the gods
As the dear act of giving life to others.
In feats of war the glory is divided,
To all imparted, to each common man,
And fortune too shall vindicate her share.
But of sweet mercy, the vast, vast renown
Is all your own ; nor officer, nor soldier
Can claim a part, the praise, the honour'd praise,
Adorns the victor ; nor is the echo lost
'Midst shouts of armies, and the trumpet's sound.
He conquers even victory itself.
Than hero more—a blessing to the world !

Pbar. Thy eloquence disarms my stubborn soul.
But wherefore urgent thus ? amidst the band
Is there who claims thy soft solicitude ?

Zen. A hoary sage—alas ! a more than father—
The best of men, preserver of my being,
A blameless shepherd ! rude of fraud and guilt,
Innoxious through his life. Oh ! mighty king,
Spare an old man, a venerable sire !
Nought has your fortune greater than the power
To serve humanity ! shew that your heart
Has the sweet grace, the gen'rous virtue too !

Pbar. My soul relents, and yields to thy entreaty,
Thy violence of prayer ; release him straight—
My brightest honours wait him ; honours fit

For him who gave thee birth; for him whose virtue
Thy gen'rous soul deems worthy its esteem.

Zen. Our humble station seeks nor pomp nor splendour—
We only ask, unenvied and obscure,
To live in blameless innocence, to seek
Our calm retreat, embrac'd in depth of woods,
And dwell with peace and humble virtue there.

Pbar. That cold disdain, which shuns admiring eyes,
Attracts the more, exalting ev'ry charm.
No more of humble birth—thy matchless beauty,
Like gems, that in the mine conceal their lustre,
Was form'd to dignify the eastern throne.
My sceptre, that strikes terror to each heart,
Grac'd by thy decent hand, shall make each subject
Adore thy softer sway. The glorious æra
Of Pharasmanes' love, his date of empire
With Ariana shar'd, henceforth begins,
And leads the laughing hours—but first the storm
Of war and wild commotion must be hush'd—
That mighty care now calls me to my throne,
To give the Roman audience; audience fit
To strike a citizen of Rome with awe,
When he beholds the majesty of kings.

[Going.

TERIBAZUS enters.

Ter. Dread sir, the Roman embassy approaches.
From yonder rampart that invests your camp,
I heard their horses' hoofs with eager speed
Beat the resounding soil.

Pbar. Let 'em approach.—
And thou, whose arrogance—but I forbear—
When Ariana pardons, my resentment
Yields to her smiles, and looks away its rage.

As when the crimes of men Jove's wrath demand,
And the red thunder quivers in his hand ;
The queen of love his vengeance can disarm
With the soft eloquence of ev'ry charm ;
Control his passions with resistless sway,
And the impending storm smile to serenest day.

[Exit, with his train.

ZENOBIA enters.

Ter. And may I then once more, thou bright perfection,
May Teribazus once again approach thee,
While thus my father, my ambitious father,
At sight of thee forgets his cruel nature,
And wonders how he feels thy beauty's power ?
Oh ! may I—but I am too importunate—
Your looks rebuke me from you, and I see
How hateful I am grown !

Zen. Mistake me not, {
Nor rashly thus arraign the looks of one,
Whose heart lies bleeding here—thy gen'rous worth
Is oft the live-long day my fav'rite theme.
But oh ! for me, for wretched Ariana,
The god of Love long since hath quench'd his torch
And ev'ry source of joy lies dead within me.

Ter. That cold averted look ! but I am us'd
To bear your scorn—your scorn that wounds the deeper,
Mask'd as it is with pity and esteem.
Yet love incurable—relentless love
Burns here a constant flame, that rises still,
And will to madness kindle, should I see
That hoard of sweets, that treasury of charms
Yield to another, to a barb'rous rival
Who persecutes a son to his undoing.

Zen. If Ariana's happiness would wound thee,
Thou 'lt ne'er have cause to murmur or repine.
Naught can divorce me from the black despair
To which I 've long been wedded.

Ter. Calm disdain,
I grant you, well becomes the tyrant fair
Whom Pharasmanes destines for his throne.
But oh ! in pity to this breaking heart,
Give me, in mercy give some other rival,
Whom I may stab, without remorse may stab,
'Midst his delight, in all his heaven of bliss,
And spurn him from the joys, that scorpion like
Shoot anguish here—here thro' my very soul.

Zen. Alas ! too gen'rous prince, the gods long since
Between us both fix'd their eternal bar.

Ter. What say'st thou, Ariana ? ha ! beware,
Nor urge me to destruction—love like mine,
Fierce, gen'rous, wild, with disappointment wild,
May rouse my desperate rage to do a deed
Will make all nature shudder. Love despis'd
Not always can respect the ties of nature !—
Driven to extremes the tend'rest passion scorn'd
May hate at length the object it adores,
And stung to madness—no ! inhuman fair,
You still must be, in all vicissitudes,
In all the scenes misfortune has in store,
You still must be the sov'reign of my soul.
But for the favour'd, for the happy rival,
By Heaven, whoe'er he be, despair and phrenzy
May strike the blow, and dash him from your arms
A sacrifice to violated love.

Zen. Why thus distract yourself with vain suspicions ?
You have no rival, whom your rage can murder—

None in the power of fate—oh ! Teribazus,
The wretched Ariana—long, long since—
My heart swells o'er—I cannot speak—a duty,
A rigorous duty bids me ne'er accept
Thy profer'd love ; a duty, which, if known,
Would in eternal silence seal thy vows,
Turn all thy rage to tears, and, oh ! my prince !
Bid thee respect calamities like mine.

[Exit.]

Ter. Yet, Ariana, stay—turn, turn, and hear me—
She's gone, the cruel, unrelenting fair !
And leaves me thus to misery of soul.

ZOPIRON enters.

Zop. Flamminiis, from the Romans is arriv'd,
And bears the olive-branch—the king your father
Assembles all his nobles—

Ter. Say, Zopiron,
Does Rome yield up Armenia ?

Zop. Rome is still
The scourge of lawless power—a people's rights
The conscript fathers have resolv'd to shield,
And to the lineal heir assert the crown.

Ter. May the stern god of battles aid their arms,
And fight with the deliverers of mankind !
Unnatural father ! that would seize my sceptre,
Mine as my brother's heir, and ravish with it
The idol of my soul—but now no more
His tyranny prevails—to empire rais'd,
'Twill be the pride of my exulting heart,
To lay my crown at Ariana's feet.

[Exit.]

Zop. Unhappy prince ! should Pharasmanes know
His ardent passion for the captive maid,
Alas ! his fatal rage—Propitious powers !

May these events—may Rome's ambassador—
 Oh ! may he come with concord in his train,
 And far avert the ills my heart forebodes !
 But lo ! Flamminius.—

RHADAMISTUS enters.

Welcome to these tents

'The harbinger of peace !

Rhad. Does your king know
 Flamminius waits his leisure ?

Zop. He prepares
 To hear you, Roman !—

Rhad. As I tread his camp
 There is I know not what of horror shoots
 Thro' all my frame—and disconcerted reason
 Suspends her function, a black train of crimes,
 Murders, and lust, and rapine, cities sack'd,
 Nations laid waste by the destructive sword,
 A thousand ruthless deeds all rise to view,
 And shake my inmost soul, as I approach.
 The author of calamity and ruin.

Zop. Then from a Roman, from a son of freedom
 Let the fell tyrant hear the voice of truth,
 'The strong resistless strain, which liberty
 Breathes in her capitol, till his proud heart
 Shudder with inward horror at itself.

Rhad. In Pharasmanes' camp that honest stile !—
 Thy visage bears the character of virtue.—
 Wilt thou impart thy name and quality ?

Zop. In me you see Zopiron ! deem me not
 A vile abettor of the tyrant's guilt.
 To me Armenia trusts her sacred rights ;
 Hither her chosen delegate she sends me,

At the tribunal of Iberia's king,
To plead her cause, an injur'd people's cause !
Oh ! never, never shall my native land
Yield to a vile usurper.

Rhad. Rome has heard
Thy patriot toil for freedom—Rhadamistus
Has heard thy generous ardor in his cause,
And pants to recompence thy truth and zeal.

Zop. Oh ! name not Rhadamistus—now no more
The god-like youth shall bless Armenia's realm.
The fates just shew'd him to the wond'ring world,
And then untimely snatch'd him from our sight !

Rhad. And didst thou know the prince ?

Zop. My lot severe
Denied that transport ; but the voice of fame
Endears his memory.

Rhad. A time may come
When you may meet, and both in friendship burn.
Still Rhadamistus lives ! —

Zop. Said'st thou, Flamminius ! —
Lives he ?

Rhad. Still he survives ; from death and peril
Saved by a miracle ! —and now for him
Rome claims Armenia.

Zop. Claims Armenia for him ! —
For Rhadamistus claims ; and will ye, gods !
Still will ye give him to a nation's prayers ?

Rhad. Alas ! he lives ;—heart-broken, desolate,
In sorrow plung'd—abandon'd to despair !

Zop. The righteous gods will vindicate his cause.
His lov'd Zenobia, Mithridates' daughter,
That every excellence—does she too live ?
Have the indulgent powers watched o'er her fate,
And say'd her for her people ?

Rhad. There, Zopiron,
 There lies the wound that pierces to his soul,
 The sharpest pang—that rends—that cleaves his heart.
 Oh! never more shall lovely lost Zenobia,
 That angel form, that pattern of all goodness,
 No, never more—she's gone, for ever gone!—
 Thou wouldst not think—her barb'rous, cruel husband—
 With his own hand—the recollected tale
 Of horror shakes my frame to dissolution!
 Her husband!—he!—that dear, that tender form!—
 Oh!—poor Zenobia—oh!— [Falls into a swoon.]

Zop. He faints;—he falls!—
 Can Roman stoicism thus dissolve
 In tender pity?—rise, Flamminius, rise;
 He stirs; he breathes; and life begins to wander
 O'er his forsaken cheek. Resume thy strength,
 And like a Roman triumph o'er your tears.

Rhad. I'll not be forc'd back to a wretched world.
 No; let me—let me die!—

Zop. His eyes reject
 The cheerful light—what can this anguish mean?

Rhad. You do but waste your pains; it is in vain!
 Away; and leave a murderer to his woes.

Zop. Why thus accuse thyself? I'll not believe it!—
 Thus let me raise thee from the earth.

Rhad. Alas! [Rising.]
 Despair weighs heavy on me.

Zop. Still I must
 Controul this sudden phrenzy.—

Rhad. Oh! Zopiron,
 Here—here it lies!—

Zop. Unburthen all, and ease
 Your loaded heart—it cannot be thou never wert
 A murderer!

Rhad. Yes!—the horror of the world!
A murd'rous wretch!—the fatal Rhadamistus!
'T was I—these felon hands!—with treacherous love
I clasp'd her in this cursed embrace—I bore her
In these detested arms, and gave that beauty,
That tender form to the devouring waves.
Plunge me, ye furies, in your lakes of fire!—
Here fix—fix all your vultures in my heart!—
And lo! they rush upon me—[Starts up.] see! see there!
With racks and wheels they come; they tear me piece-meal—
'T is just, Zenobia! I deserve it all— [Falls upon Zopiron.]

Zop. Assist him, guardian powers—your own high will
Guides these events!—revive, my prince, revive!

Rhad. Why thus recall me to despair and horror?
To bid me hate the light, detest myself,
Traitor to nature—traitor to my love!—
And yet, Zopiron, yet I am not plung'd
So far in guilt, but thou may'st pity me.
Heaven, I attest—yes you can witness, gods!
I meant to perish with her—but the fates
Denied that comfort—from her circling arms
The torrent bore me far—expiring, senseless,
Gasping in death, the overflowing tide
Impetuous drove me on th' unwish'd for shore.
There soon deserted by the merciless stream,
A band of Romans, as from Syria's frontier
They rang'd the country round, descried me stretch'd
Pale and inanimate—with barbarous pity
They lent their aid, and chain'd me to the rack
Of inauspicious life!—

Zop. For wondrous ends
Mysterious providence has still reserv'd you,
To circulate the happiness of millions,
A patriot prince—

Rhad. Would they had let me perish !
What has a wretch like me to do in life,
When my Zenobia's lost ? 't is true, my friend,
She begg'd to die ; but that pathetic look,
Her tears, embraces, and those streaming eyes,
Still beauteous in distress !—each winning grace,
Her every charm should have forbid the deed,
And pleaded for her life !

Zop. And yet, my prince,
When self-acquitting conscience——

Rhad. Self-condemn'd,
My soul is rack'd, is tortur'd—not her child,
Her unborn infant, the first fruit of love,
Not even her babe could with the voice of nature
Plead for herself, or for its wretched mother.
They perish'd both, she and her little one,
And I survive to tell it.

Zop. Let not grief
O'erwhelm your reason thus—what ! when your father,
Your cruel father, reeking from the blood
Of Mithridates——

Rhad. Naught but death was left,
Yet even that last sad refuge was debarr'd me !
Ever since I've liv'd in misery ; my days
Were colour'd all with anguish and despair !
Long from the Romans I conceal'd my name.
At length reveal'd me to a chosen friend ;
Journey'd with him to Rome ; and in full senate
Told all the dismal story of my woes.
The conscript fathers heard, and dropt a tear——
Then to quick vengeance fir'd, dispatch'd their legions,
To wage the war : Paulinus leads them on,
And now to me commits this embassy,
With fully delegated powers from Rome.

Zop. With one united voice Armenia calls
For Mithridates' heir ! convinc'd by rumour
That thou art lost, the general cry demands
Your brother Teribazus—

Rhad. He, Zopiron,
Is to these eyes a stranger.

Zop. Hapless prince !
A cloud of woes lies brooding o'er his head.
A fair, a lovely captive rules his heart ;
Her name is Ariana ; and indeed
No wonder she attracts his soft regard,
And kindles all the vehemence of love.
The tyrant eyes her too with fierce desire—
And ruin nods o'er Teribazus' head.

Rhad. By Heaven it shall not be—alas ! I know
The pang of losing whom the heart adores.
I'll yield him up Armenia—what are crowns
But toys of vain ambition, when the lov'd—
The dear partaker of my throne is lost ?

TIGRANES enters.

Zop. What would Tigranes ?
Tig. Pharasmanes calls
Flamminius to his presence—

Rhad. I attend him ;—
So tell your king —

Tig. Instant he waits thee, Roman. [Exit.
Rhad. How my heart trembles at the awful meeting !

Zop. Then summon all your strength—the lapse of time
From early youth, when Pharasmanes saw you,
Affliction's inward stroke—that Roman garb,
All will protect, and cloak you from detection !

Rhad. Zopiron, yes ; in this important crisis,
When violated laws, and injur'd men,

When my own wrongs are lab'ring in my heart,
 The great occasion calls for firmest vigour.
 Yes, in this interview I will maintain
 A Roman's part; in Pharasmanes' soul
 I'll wake the furies of detested guilt,
 And pour the rapid energy of truth
 Till ev'n to himself his crimes are known,
 And the usurper tremble on his throne.

[Exeunt.]

ACT III. SCENE I.

PHARASMANES *on his Throne*; TIGRANES, ZOPIRON,
 Officers, &c.

Pharasmanes.

WHERE is this bold republican from Rome?
 This enemy of kings?—Tigranes, thou
 Bid the plebeian enter—Pharasmanes
 Vouchsafes him audience.—

FLAMMINIUS enters.

Phar. Now, Flamminius, say
 What motive brings you to Araxes' banks,
 To wage this slow, this philosophic war?

Rhad. By me, unworthy of the important charge,
 By me, unequal to the arduous theme,
 The conscript fathers here explain their conduct,
 And justify the ways of Rome to kings.

Phar. Roman, thou may'st declaim with all thy pomp
 Of idle eloquence.

Rhad. No power of words,
 No graceful periods of harmonious speech
 Dwell on my lip—the only art I boast
 Is honest truth, unpolish'd, unadorn'd—

Truth that must strike conviction to your heart,
Truth that informs you—to usurp a crown,
For dire ambition to unpeople realms,
Are violations of each sacred law,
And bid the Roman eagle, wing'd with vengeance,
To the Araxes' margin bend her flight,
To tell destruction it shall rage no more.

Phar. And dares Paulinus' soldier, dar'st thou, slave,
Thus offer vile indignity, and mouth
The language of your forum to a king?

Rhad. Rome knows, and owns you as Iberia's king,
But not Armenia's.

Phar. Ha! —

Rhad. Th' assembled senate—
Acknowledges your vast renown in arms,
And honours the unshaken fortitude,
Even of a foe—but, sir, the fortitude,
Whose brutal rage lays nations desolate,
It is the glory of imperial Rome
To humble and subdue—it is the glory
Of Rome, that spares the vanquish'd, 'tis her pride
To set the nations free; to fix the bounds
Of the fell tyrant's power; to trace the circle
From which he must not move—these are the arts
The bright prerogative of Rome—of Rome,
The mistress of the world, whose conqu'ring banners
O'er Asia's realms so oft have wav'd in triumph,
And made even kings her subjects—

Phar. Ha! vain boaster!

Rhad. Made oriental kings, short by the knee
Accept their crown, with tears of joy accept it,
And be the viceroys of a Roman senate.

Pbar. And this to Pharasmanes?—has not yet
 A train of conquests taught you to revere
 This good right arm in war? This arm the Parthians
 Have felt with fatal overthrow—no spoil,
 No trophies won from me have grac'd their triumphs;
 No friends of mine were harness'd to their chariots;
 No captive chief, like your own mangled Crassus,
 There roams a sullen ghost, and calls for vengeance,
 For vengeance still unpaid, and calls in vain
 For the sad funeral rites. Would Rome presume
 To wrest Armenia from me, lo! my banners
 From frosty Caucasus to Phasis' banks
 Wave high in air, and shadow all the land.
 Call your embattled legions—or does Rome,
 All conqu'ring Rome, that mistress of the world,
 Does she at length by her ambassadors
 Negotiate thus the war?

Rhad. Rome, sir, commands
 The subject world, for she adores the gods—
 And their all-powerful aid.

Pbar. Wouldest thou dispute
 My lawful claim, arm thee with sword and fire,
 Not with vain subtleties, and idle maxims.
 Armenia's crown is mine, deriv'd to me,
 Heir to a brother, and a son deceas'd.

Rhad. And can a murderer, can the midnight ruffian,
 Prove himself heir, by the assassin's stab?

Pbar. Thou base reviler!

[Comes forward and draws his sabre.]

Tig. Moderate your fury; [Holding him.]
 It were unjust—

Zop. The character he bears—
 The laws of nations—

Phar. Thou base insolent !
Who dar'st to wound the ear of sacred kings
With a black crime, that's horrible to nature !

Rhad. Yes, horrible to nature !—yet the world
Has heard it all—thou art the man of blood !
A brother's blood yet smokes upon thy hand—
Not his white age, his venerable looks,
Not even his godlike virtues could withhold thee.
Gash'd o'er with wounds he falls ; he bleeds, he dies,
Without a groan he dies !—that is thy work,
Thine, murderer, thine !—

Phar. No more—the hand of heaven
Shook from the blasted tree the wither'd fruit—

Rhad. Forbear the impious strain—it is the stile
Ambition speaks, when for a crown it stabs,
Then dares, with execrable mockery dares,
Traduce the governing all-righteous mind.

Phar. He harrows up my soul !—and dost thou think
A madman's ravings—

Rhad. Since that hour accurst
Hast thou not plung'd thee deeper still in guilt ?
Your son—your blameless son—

Phar. His crimes provok'd
A father's wrath—his and Zenobia's crimes !

Rhad. She too—untimely lost---unbidden tears
Forbear to stream, nor quite unman me thus.

Phar. In tears !—by heaven, thou woman-hearted slave,
Those coward symptoms have some latent spring
That lies conceal'd within that treacherous heart.

Rhad. They are the tears humanity lets fall
When soft-ey'd beauty dies untimely slain.
But to avenge her death, array'd in terror
The Roman legions—

Phar. Lead 'em to the charge....
 Thou quit my camp :—If when yon sun descends
 Thou linger'st here, the title of ambassador
 Shall naught avail to save thee from my fury.

Rhad. Ere that resign Armenia. Till the close
 Of day, I give thee leisure to revolve
 The vengeance Rome prepares. Thou know'st
 With what a pond'rous arm her hardy sons
 Lift the avenging spear. Be timely wise,
 Nor dare provoke your fate. [Exit.]

Phar. Roman, farewell!—
 Do thou, Tigranes, issue forth my orders
 From tent to tent, that each man stand prepar'd
 For the dead midnight hour—with silent march
 Then will I pour with ruinous assault
 Upon th' astonish'd foe, my horses hoofs
 Imbrue in blood, and give to-morrow's sun
 A spectacle of horror and destruction.

[He ascends his throne, and the back Scene closes.]

SCENE II.

ZENOBIA and MEGISTUS enters.

Zen. Oh! tell me all, Megistus; let me hear
 All that concerns my child, my blooming boy,
 My little Rhadamistus—is he safe?
 Give me the truth—do not deceive a mother
 Who doats upon her babe—is my child safe?

Meg. Dry up your tears—I cannot bear to see you
 Afflicted thus—your infant hero's safe—
 You may believe your faithful old-Megistus.

Zen. I do believe thee—but excuse my weakness—
My flutt'ring fears for ever paint him to me
By ruffians seiz'd, and as he sees the knife
Aim'd at his little throat, in vain imploring
For me by name, and begging my assistance,
While far, far off his miserable mother
No aid can give, nor snatch him to her heart.

Meg. I never yet deceiv'd you—by yon heaven
The prince still lives—when I regain'd my cottage
After the toils of many a weary day,
I found him there—but griev'd and wondering much
Where his dear mother was.

Zen. Megistus tell me,
Oh ! tell me each particular : his looks,
All his apt questions, his enchanting words ;
For I could hear of him for ever—lovely youth !
His father's image blooming in his boy !
Through seven revolving years my only comfort !—
When from my eyes the sudden sorrows gush'd
How would he look, and ask his wretched mother
What meant those falling tears ?—alas ! even now
I see him here before me—did my child
Think his poor mother lost ?

Meg. At first he seem'd
To pine in thought at your long weary absence,
And many a look he cast, that plainly spoke
His little bosom heav'd with various passions.
Still would he seek you in each well known haunt,
Each bower, each cavern, like the tender fawn
That through the woodland seeks its mother lost,
Exploring all around with anxious eye,
And looking still unutterable grief,
Lonely and sad, and stung with keen regret.

Zen. Did my child weep?—not much, I hope—

Meg. With soothing tales

I labour'd to beguile him from his sorrow;
I promis'd your return; a gentle smile
Brighten'd his anxious look; he sigh'd content,
And then I led him to a safer dwelling
Among the shepherds of the Syrian vale,
Who all have sworn to guard him as their own,
And in due season lead him to the Romans.

Zen. Oh! may those shepherds know the kindest influence
Of the indulgent heavens!—yet, why not stay
To guard him—but I'll not complain—on me
Your cares were fix'd—oh! tell me how the gods
Watch'd over all thy ways, and brought thee to me?
Where hast thou liv'd these many, many days?

Meg. In bitterness of soul I've liv'd; thy fate,
Thy tender form deep imag'd in my breast!
I rang'd the banks where the Araxes flows,
But bring, alas! no tidings of your lord.
Heart-broken, wearied out, I measur'd back
My feeble steps, but thou wert ravish'd thence;—
For thee I travers'd hills and forests drear;
Thee I invok'd, that ev'ry cavern'd rock,
Each vale, each mountain echo'd with thy name.

Zen. And here at length you find me, here encompass'd
With all the worst of ills—hence let us fly
To the blessed Syrian valley, where my child
Wins with his early manhood every heart,
And calls for me, and chides this long delay.

Meg. Vain the attempt—one only way is left—
Reveal thee to the ambassador of Rome.—
Safe in his train thou may'st escape this place,
And gain Paulinus' camp—Zenobia known
Will meet protection there.

Zen. The gods inspire
'The happy counsel---ha! Tigranes comes!
Retire, Megistus---[He goes out.]---a gay dawn of hope
Beams forth at length, and lights up day within me.

TIGRANES enters.

Tig. Hail, princess, destin'd to imperial sway,
To grace with beauty Pharasmanes' throne!
By me the impatient king requests you'll fix
The happy nuptial hour.

Zen. Thou might'st as well
Command me wed the forked lightning's blaze
That gilds the storm, and be in love with horror.

Tig. Take heed, rash fair! ---an eastern monarch's love,
Ardent as his, must not be made the sport
Of tyrant beauty—when a rival dares
Oppose his sovereign's wish—

Zen. Does Pharasmanes,
Say, does your king permit his spies of state,
That curse of human kind, to breathe their whispers
In his deluded ear?

Tig. Full well 't is known
That Teribazus bids you thus revolt,
And draws your heart's allegiance from your king.

Zen. Thou vile accuser! If the prince's virtues
Have touch'd my bosom, what hast thou to urge?
What if a former Hymeneal vow
Has bound my soul?—what if a father, sir,
A father dear as my heart's purple drops,
Enjoin a rigid duty ne'er to share
The throne of Mithridates with a murderer?

Tig. Madam, those words—

Zen. Thou instrument of ill !
 Who still art ready with a tale suborn'd,
 And, if thou art not perjur'd, dar'st betray ;
 Away—and let thy conscience tell the rest. [Exit.]

Tig. [Alone.] Vain, haughty fair !—thou hast provok'd
 my rage
 By wrongs unnumber'd—but for all those wrongs
 Soon shall inevitable ruin seize thee.

RHADAMISTUS enters.

Rhad. Perhaps ere this your king's tumultuous passions
 Sink to a calm, and reason takes her turn.
 Then seek him, sir, and bear a Roman's message,
 The terms of peace humanity suggests.
 Tell him Flamminius wishes to prevent
 The rage of slaughter and the streams of blood
 Which else shall deluge yonder crimson plains.

Tig. Already, Roman, his resolve is fix'd.
 War, horrid war, impends.

Rhad. And yet in pity
 To human kind, to the unhappy millions
 Who soon shall die, and with their scatter'd bones
 Whiten the plains of Asia, it were best
 To sheath the sword, and join in Rome's alliance.
 Wilt thou convey my message ?

Tig. I obey. [Exit.]

Rhad. [Alone.] May some propitious power inspire his
 heart,
 And touch the springs of human kindness in him.
 Else against whom amidst the charging hosts
 Must Rhadamistus' sword be levelled ?—ha !—
 Spite of his crimes he is my father still—
 And must this arm against the source of life—

Nay more, perhaps against a brother too,
A brother still unknown!—he too may die
By this unconscious hand! this hand already
Inur'd to murder whom my heart adores!
My brother then may bleed! and when in death
Gasping he lies, and pours his vital stream,
Then in that moment shall the gen'rous youth
Extend his arms, and with a piteous look
Tell me—a brother doth forgive his murderer!
Gods! you have doom'd me to the blackest woe,
To be a wretch abhor'd, author of crimes
From which my tortur'd breast revolts with horror!
Who's there?—a youth comes forward; now be firm,
Be firm my heart, and guard thy fatal secret!

TERIBAZUS enters.

Ter. Illustrious Roman! if misfortune's son,
A wretched, ruin'd, miserable prince
May claim attention—

Rhad. Ha!—can this be he?
The graces of his youth—each feeling here,
Here at my heartstrings tell me 'tis my brother! [Aside.

Ter. I see you're mov'd, and I intrude too far.

Rhad. Pursue your purpose—warmest friendship for you
Glow's in this breast—

Ter. Though Pharasmanes' fury
Maintains a fix'd hostility with Rome,
Blend not the son with all a father's crimes.

Rhad. Go on—I pant to hear—

Ter. My father's cruelty
Each day breaks out in some new act of horror,
Nor lets the sword grow cold from human blood.

First, in his brother's breast he plung'd it ; then
Inflam'd to fiercer rage 'gainst his own son.
Oh, Rhadamistus ! thou much injur'd prince ! —

Rhad. And didst thou love that brother ?

Ter. Generous Roman,
He lived far hence remote—I ne'er beheld him,
But the wide world resounded with his fame.

Rhad. [Aside.] Hold, hold, my tears ! — Oh ! they will
burst their way

At this his virtuous tenderness and love !

Ter. And dost thou weep too, Roman ?

Rhad. From such horror,
And so much cruelty my nature shrinks.
Whatever purpose rolls within thy breast,
Boldly confide it—Shall I, arm'd with vengeance,
Assault the purple tyrant in his camp ?
Or wilt thou join my steps ; then in the front
Of a brave veteran legion head the war,
Seek the usurper 'midst his plumed troops,
And thus avenge mankind ?

Ter. No ; far from me,
Far be the guilt of meditating aught
Against the life from whence my being sprung.
Let him oppress me, he's a parent still !

Rhad. He rives my heart ! — Oh ! what a lot is mine !

[Aside.]

Ter. Not for myself I fear ; but oh ! Flamminius,
A lovely captive ; 't is for her I tremble ;
For Ariana, for that sweet perfection ;
She is her sex's boast ! — her gentle bosom
Fraught with each excellence ! — her form and feature
Touch'd by the hand of elegance ; adorn'd
By every grace, and cast in beauty's mould !

Her Pharasmanes means to ravish from me.
But thou convey her hence—'t is all I ask.

Rhad. By Heaven I will—do thou too join our flight ;
Armenia shall be thine, and that sweet maid
Reward thy goodness with connubial love,
Adorn thy throne, and make a nation bless'd !

Ter. Make Ariana happy ; bear her hence,
And save those bright unviolated charms
From Pharasmanes' power—when wish'd for peace
Settles a jarring world, Flamminius then,
Then will I seek thee. Wilt thou then resign her ?

Rhad. Yes then, as pure as the unsullied snow
That never felt a sunbeam ; then I'll give her
Back to thy faithful love.

Ter. Thou generous Roman,
In gratitude I bow—she's here at hand ;
A moment brings her to you, while at distance
I watch each avenue, each winding path,
That none intrude upon your privacy. [Exit.

Rhad. [Alone.] At length I've seen my brother ; know
how much
He differs from his father ! he shall seek
The Roman tents ; I'll there disclose myself ;
There will embrace him with a brother's love.
Oh ! how the tender transport heaves and swells,
Till thus the fond excess dissolves in tears !

MEGISTUS enters, leading ZENOBIA.

Zen. Alas ! my heart forebodes I know not what.

Meg. Dispel each doubt—this is your only refuge.

Zen. Thou generous Roman, if distress like mine—
If an unhappy captive may approach thee—

Rhad. To me affliction's voice—Ye Powers of Heaven !
That air!—those features!—that remember'd glance!

Zen. If thus a wretch's presence can alarm you—

Rhad. The music of that voice ! such once she look'd !
And if I had not plung'd her in the stream,
I could persuade myself—

Zen. Those well known accents !
Those tender soft regards!—nay, mock me not !
I could not hope to see thee—Tell me, art thou
That once ador'd !—oh !——— [Faints into Megistus' arms,

Meg. Ah ! her strength forsakes her.
Support her, Heaven ! [Catches her in his arms.

Rhad. Ye wonder-working gods !
Is this illusion all ? or does your goodness
Indeed restore her ?—If I do not dream,
If this be true, oh ! let those angel eyes
Open to life, to love, and Rhadamistus.

Meg. What further miracles doth Heaven prepare ?
Zen. Forgive my weakness—the air-painted image
Of my lov'd lord—and see ! again it 's present !
That look that speaks the fond impulsion'd soul !
Yes, such he was !—Oh ! art thou—tell me—say—
Art thou restored me ?—Art thou Rhadamistus ?

Rhad. I have not murder'd her ! benignant gods !
I am not guilty—my Zenobia lives !

Zen. It is my lord !—Oh ! I can hold no longer—
But thus delighted spring to his embrace,
Thus wander o'er him with my tears and kisses,
And thus, and thus, speak my enraptur'd soul.

Rhad. She lives ! she lives !—What kind protecting god,
Long lost, and long lamented, gives thee back,
Gives me to view thee, and to hear thy voice
With joy to ecstasy, with tears to rapture ?

Zen. This good old man—'t was he preserv'd me for you.

Meg. Oh ! day of charms !—oh ! unexpected hour !

I have not liv'd in vain—these gushing eyes

Have seen their mutual transports !

Rhad. Gen'rous friend,

Come to my heart—Zenobia's second father !

Zen. Thou art indebted more than thou canst pay him,

Indebted for our infant babe preserv'd,

The blossom of our joys !—thou canst not think

How much he looks, and moves, and talks like thee.

Rhad. Oh ! mighty gods !—it is too much of bliss,

Too exquisite to bear ! these barbarous hands

Had well nigh murder'd both my wife and child !

Wilt thou forgive me—oh ! my best delight—

Wilt thou receive a traitor to your arms ?

Wilt thou, Zenobia ?

Zen. Will I, gracious Heaven !

Thou source of all my comfort !

Meg. Ha ! beware,

Beware my prince !—but now with hasty step

I saw Tigranes circling yonder tent.

Rhad. Th' ambassador of Rome he seeks, on business

Of import high—I will prevent his speed——

And must I then so soon depart, Zenobia ?

Zen. Hence, quickly hence—anon we 'll meet again——

Rhad. Yes, we will meet; the gods have given thee to me,

And they will finish their own holy work.

[Exit.]

Meg. My prayers are heard at length—Zenobia still

Shall be Armenia's queen.

Zen. Oh ! good Megistus,

Heaven has been bounteous, and restor'd my lord.—

With him I 'll fly, wrapt in the gloom of night,

And thou, Megistus, thou shalt join our flight ;

Plac'd near his throne, thy gen'rous zeal shall share
 The bright reward of all thy toil and care ;
 While I, redeem'd at length from fierce alarms,
 Forget my woes in Rhadamistus' arms.

[Exeunt.]

ACT IV. SCENE I.

RHADAMISTUS and TERIBAZUS enter.

Teribazus.

Thou art a friend indeed, thou gen'rous man !
 The best of friends, to save such innocence,
 That lovely virgin bloom !—the pious act
 Shall to remotest time transmit thy name,
 Ennobled by humanity and virtue.

Rhad. Alas ! no praise I merit ; 'tis a deed
 That loses virtue's name—

Ter. Flamminius, no !

Thou shalt not derogate from worth like thine.
 But, oh ! beware, my friend, and steel thy heart
 Against the sweet illapse of gentler passions.
 To love her were such treachery !—by heaven !
 It were a fraud of a more damned hue—
 A fraud to sacred friendship !—but my soul
 Rejects the mean suspicion—thou art just,
 And Ariana shall be mine again !

Rhad. If when the tumult of the war is past,
 You then persist to claim her—

Ter. Then persist !

When I do not persist—whene'er my heart
 Forgets the fond idea—ha !—take heed—
 Your colour dies by fits—and now again

It flushes o'er your cheek—if beauty's power
Can waken soft desire—and sure such beauty
May warm the breast of Stoic apathy—
If thou canst love, resign the trust at once.
For, oh! to lose her, to behold those charms,
That all-perfection yielded to another,
Were the worst agony, the keenest stab
That ever pierc'd a lover to the soul.

The thought—the very thought inflames to madness!

Rhad. [Aside.] Not till the fever of his mind subsides,
Must I reveal me; the disclosure now
Would to his phrensy give a whirlwind's wing,
And bury all in ruin.—Let her then,
Yes, Teribazus, let the blooming maid,
Still in this camp, a voluntary captive,
Since you will have it so—since weak mistrust
Can taint a noble spirit—let her here
Teach that rare beauty to display its charms,
Its various graces; bid those radiant eyes
Dart their quick glances to the tyrant's soul,
Inflame his hot desires, and half absolve them.

Ter. Madness and horror!—no!—haste, fly, begone,
And give her hence safe conduct—I can trust
To Roman continence—your Scipio's praise
Shall be the theme of fame's eternal lip!

Rhad. Thou too attend her steps; watch all her ways;
When we have reach'd the Roman sanctuary,
Then shall such wonders to thy list'ning ear—
The web which fate has wove; beware, my friend—
Tigranes comes—What wouldst thou, sir?

TIGRANES enters.

Tig. The king
Grants you one parley more—even now this way

He bends his steps—remote from all he means
To hold a private conference.

Rhad. Rome's ambassador
Attends his pleasure. [Exit Tig.

Ter. I must hence, Flamminius—
Farewell!—yet, ere thou goest—I still must crave
Another interview—Farewell! remember,
My love, my life, my all depend on thee. [Exit.

Rhad. Ah! luckless prince! how lost in error's maze
Blindly he wanders, and love's sweet delusion
Infuses its enchantment through his heart!
But when remov'd from Pharasmanes' power
He learns my prior claim; his gen'rous friendship
Will bound with transport at a brother's joys,
And with a warmth of sympathy partake 'em.
But ha!—my father! grant me strength, ye powers!
To meet the dread encounter.

PHARASMANES enters.

Pbar. Once again
Ere you depart, if Pharasmanes deign
To treat, and thus expostulate with Rome,
'T is to thy prayers I grant it.

Rhad. Rome had rather
Persuade than conquer—her well-balanc'd justice—

Pbar. No more of Roman justice—blazon not
Virtues you ne'er have practic'd—with the name,
The specious name of love for human kind
You sanctify the insatiate rage of conquest,
And where the sword has made a solitude,
That you proclaim a peace. Even now your views
Stand manifest to sight—To thee 'tis known
That Rhadamistus lives!—

Rhad. How, sir!—can he—

Does that unhappy prince—

Pbar. Thou false dissembler!

Yes in thy heart the fatal secret's lodg'd!—

Rhad. Sir, if your son—if you will search his heart—

Pbar. From certain fugitives I've learn'd it all—

In yonder camp, conceal'd from vulgar eyes,

To war against his father still he lives!

Why dost thou dropp dejected?—something lurks

Beneath that burning blush—

Rhad. That burning blush

Glows on my cheek for thee—I know your son,

And know him unsusceptible of guilt.

Pbar. Then, Roman, mark my words—wouldest thou prevent

The carnage fate prepares on yonder plains?

Go, tell Paulinus I will treat of terms

With him, who brings me Rhadamistus' head.

Rhad. Your own son's head!

Pbar. Why dost thou gaze so earnest?

Why those emotions struggling for a vent?

Rhad. Amazement checks my voice, and lost in wonder
I view the unnatural father, who would bathe
His hands in blood—in a son's blood—a son
Who pants—with ardor pants—on terms of peace
To sheathe the sword, and with a filial hand
To throw a veil over a father's crimes.

Pbar. By Heaven 'tis false—has he not dar'd to league
With my determin'd foes?—even to the senate,
To every region, where his voice could pierce,
Has he not fled with the delusive story?
With grief and loud complaints inflam'd the world?

And even now, does not the stripling come
To the Araxes' banks with Rome in arms ?

Rhad. Though urg'd by dire constraint, yet Heaven can
witness

His strong reluctance.—

Pbar. Let the rebel know
He never shall ascend Armenia's throne.

Rhad. And shall destruction with her horrid train
Stalk o'er the land ?

Pbar. Yes—let destruction loose—
'Tis Pharasmanes' glory—

Rhad. Can the rage,
And the wild tumult of destructive havock
Administer delight !—alas !—the day
That deluges the land with human blood,
Is that a day of glory ?
I, sir, have travers'd o'er the field of death,
Where war had spent its rage—hadst thou beheld
That scene of horror—where unnumber'd wretches
In mangled heaps lay welt'ring in their gore ;
Where the fond father in the gasp of death
Wept for his children—where the lover sigh'd
For her, whom never more his eyes could view ;
Where various misery sent forth its groans ;—
Had'st thou beheld that scene—the touch of nature
Had stirr'd within thee, and the virtuous drop
Of pity gush'd unbidden from thy eye.

Pbar. Enervate slave !—here ends all further parley.
Go, tell your general, tell your Roman chiefs,
The father claims his son. Have we not heard
How your own Brutus to the lictor's sword
Condemn'd his children ?—and would Rome dispute
A king's paternal power ?—let 'em yield up

The treach'rous boy, or terrible in arms
Shall Pharasmanes overwhelm their legions,
Mow down their cohorts, and their mangled limbs
Give to the vulture's beak.

Rhad. And yet reflect——

Phar. Roman, no more.

Rhad. Unwilling I withdraw ;——

A father's stern resolve the son shall mourn,
And with a pang of nature shall behold
The Roman eagle dart like thunder on thee. [Exit.]

Phar. [Alone.] Away, and leave me, slave!—to-morrow's sun
Shall see my great revenge—mean time I give
The gentle hours to love and Ariana.—
What, ho! Tigranes!

TIGRANES enters.

Phar. Does the stubborn fair
Yield to my ardent vows?

Tig. She mocks your passion,
And gives to Teribazus all her smiles.

Phar. By heaven! even love itself shall be my slave!—
Yet love like mine requires her soft consent,
And will not riot o'er her plunder'd charms.
Quick, bring her father to me. —

Tig. By your orders
At hand Megistus waits your sovereign will. [Exit.]

Phar. Bring him before us—wise and prudent age
Will plead my cause, and second my desires.

MEGISTUS enters.

Meg. Dread sir—a blameless—a distress'd old man,
Of guilt unconscious——

Pbar. Whatsoe'er thy guilt
A smile from Ariana expiates all.

Meg. Believe me, sir, I never have offended—
She was my sole delight; my age's comfort;
For her I felt more than a parent's love—
But 'midst the troubles that distract the land,
I lost her—in despair—with yearning heart
I rang'd the country round in fond pursuit—
This is my crime—sure, 'tis no crime to love
Such blooming innocence!—

Pbar. Dispel thy fears—
Thy love for Ariana speaks thy virtue—
That graceful form, that symmetry of shape,
That bloom, those features, those love-darting eyes,
All, all attract, that there each fond admirer
Could ever gaze, enamour'd of her charms.

Meg. Alas! whate'er the symmetry of shape,
Whate'er the grace that revels in her feature,
Glows in her bloom, or sparkles in her eye,
They all are transient beauties, soon to fade,
And leave inanimate that decent form.
Inward affliction saps the vital frame,
Incurable affliction!—fix'd in woe
Her eyes, for ever motionless and dim,
Gaze on the fancied image of her husband.

Pbar. Her husband!

Meg. Yes; a husband sever'd from her
By fatal chance!—him she for ever sees
With fancy's gushing eye, and seeks him still
In fond excursions of delusive thought.
She pines each hour, and even in blooming dies,
As drooping roses—while the worm unseen
Preys on their fragrant sweets, still beauteous look,
And waste their aromatic lives in air.

Phar. The rose transplanted to a warmer sky
Shall raise its languid head, and all be well.

Meg. Her husband still survives, and far remote
He wanders in Armenia's realm—

Phar. No more
To call her his!—by all my promis'd joys
His doom is fix'd!—do thou streight seek thy daughter,
My loveliest Ariana—in her ear
Breathe the mild accents of a father's voice,
And reconcile her heart to love and me.

Meg. Your pardon, sir; it were not fit my voice
Should teach her to betray her holy vows.

Phar. When Pharasmanes speaks—

Meg. My life is his—
And when he wills it, 't is devoted to him—
But, sir, though poor, my honour still is mine—
'T is all that heaven has given me—and that gift
The gods expect I never should resign.

Phar. And dost thou hesitate? What, when a crown
Invites thy daughter to imperial splendor?

Meg. Oh! not for me such splendor? I have liv'd
My humble days in virtuous poverty.
To tend my flock, to watch each rising flower,
Each herb, each plant that drinks the morning dew,
And lift my praise to the just gods on high!—
These were my habits, these my only cares;—
These hands suffic'd to answer my desires,
And having naught—yet naught was wanting to me.

Phar. Away, thou slave!—I would not quite despise
thee—

Or yield your daughter, or my swiftest vengeance
Falls on thy hoary head—a monarch's love
Shall seize her trembling to his eager arms,

'Then spurn her back a prey to wan despair,
 'Till bitter anguish blast each wither'd charm,
 And rave in vain for love and empire scorn'd ! [Exit.]

Meg. [Alone.] Fell monster, go!—inexorable tyrant!—
 Perhaps I should have sooth'd his lion rage
 With feign'd compliance—ha!—why sudden thus—

ZENOBIA enters.

Zen. Th' important hour, Megistus, now approaches—
 Lo! the last blushes of departing day
 But feebly streak yon dim horizon's verge.
 My Rhadamistus comes to guide my steps—
 Through devious paths seek thou Zopiron's tent—
 Thus we shall lull suspicion—

Meg. I obey;—
 May guardian angels spread their wings around thee!

[Exit.]

Zen. [Alone.] Yes, the bless'd gods, who through the
 maze of fate
 Have led us once again to meet in life,
 Will prove the friends of virtue to the last.
 Ha!—Teribazus comes.

TERIBAZUS enters.

Ter. And is it given
 Once more to see thee here?—dost thou avoid me?
 Dost thou despise me in this tender moment
 When my soul bleeds with anguish at the thought
 Of parting with thee?—Ariana!

Zen. Oh!—

Unhappy prince!—oh! fly me; shun me; death
 And ruin follow—one short moment's stay
 Will rouze your father's rage—

Ter. My father's rage
Already has undone me—ah! in tears!—
And do they fall for me? Does that soft sigh
Heave for the lost, afflicted Teribazus?—

Zen. Yes, the tear falls, and the sigh heaves for thee—
Thy elegance of mind—the various graces
That bloom around thee, and adorn the hero,
Nay, other ties there are which strongly plead,
And bid me tremble for thee.
And yet, sad recompence for all thy friendship,
To warn thee hence, to bid thee shun my ways,
Is all the gratitude I now can offer.

Ter. Thus must we part?

Zen. A rival is at hand—

Here in the camp, an unexpected rival,
Sent by the gods, the idol of my soul!

Ter. What say'st thou, Ariana? has another
Usurp'd thy heart?—unkind, relentless maid!
Since first thy beauty dawn'd upon my sight,
How have I lov'd, repented, yet lov'd on!—
Ev'n against you, against myself I struggl'd—
Present I fled you---absent I ador'd—
I fled for refuge to the forest's gloom,
But in the forest's gloom thy image met me!—
The shades of night, the lustre of the day,
All, all retrac'd my Ariana's form.
Thy form pursu'd me in the battle's rage,
'Midst shouts, and all the clangor of the war.
It stole me from myself! my lonely tent
Re-echoes with my groans, and in the ranks
The wond'ring soldier hears my voice no more.

Zen. Yet leave me, Teribazus, gen'rous youth!
Remembrance oft shall dwell upon thy praise,
But for my love 'tis all another's claim.

Ter. Another's claim! why wilt thou torture thus
 A fond despairing wretch?—oh! not for me
 Those sorrows fall, they are another's tears;
 Another claims them from me—name this rival
 That my swift fury—tell me, has Flamminius,
 Has the base Roman broke his promis'd faith?
 Will not the barb'rous man afford you shelter?

Zen. Why wilt thou force me speak? the fate of all—
 Thine, Teribazus—mine—the fate of one,
 Whom, were he known, thy heart holds ever dear,
 Is now concern'd—Flamminius claims my love,
 Long since he won my heart—

Ter. Vindictive gods!
 Flamminius claims thy love!—not Cæsar's self
 Shall dare to wrest thee from me, Ariana!
 Thus on my knees—would I could perish here—
 That ev'n in death I still might gaze upon thee,
 Till the last pang divide thee from my heart.

RHADAMISTUS enters.

Rhad. It was the voice of anguish and despair!
 Why thus, illustrious prince—

Ter. [Starting up.] Thou treach'rous Roman!—
 Who com'st to violate each sacred tie,
 The laws of honour, and the laws of love!
 Who com'st beneath the mask of public faith
 To do a robber's work!

Rhad. When to your camp
 I bring a heart that longs to serve you, prince,
 Why this intemp'rare rage?—

Ter. To do the work
 Of perfidy and fraud! but first by rapine,
 By violated maids your city grew;

And do you come to emulate your sires ?
Unwilling to degenerate in vice.—

Rhad. Mistaken youth !—oh ! if you did but know me !
If you but knew the justice Rome intends—

Ter. Justice and Rome ! and dost thou dare to join
Two names so opposite ? have we not heard
Of frugal consuls, and of stoic chiefs,
Who soon forgetting here their sabine farms,
Made war a trade, and then return'd to Rome
Rich with the plunder of the rifled east ?
Again some new Lucullus leads them on,
Fir'd with the love of rapine.

Rhad. Fir'd with zeal
To break a nation's chains—would'st thou but hear me—
It is a friend implores

Zen. A gen'rous friend !—
Then listen to him—let these streaming eyes,
These earnest prayers—this supplicating form—

Ter. Leagu'd with my foe behold her !—mighty
gods !—

Have I deserv'd it of her ?—

Rhad. Yet be calm—
Yet listen to me—Oh ! I could unfold—
Yet stay, I'll prove myself a brother to thee.

Ter. Roman expect me in the battle's front—
Instant depart, but leave thy prey behind ;
Dare not, I charge thee, dare not tempt her hence—
To-morrow's sun shall see me cloth'd in terror
Pursue thy steps, thro' all the ranks of war,
Till my spear fix thee quiv'ring to the ground.

[Exit.]

Zen. Yet, Rhadamistus, call him, let him know—
Rhad. Thou lovely trembler ! banish ev'ry fear,
The time now bids us hence ; and lo ! the moon

Streams her mild radiance on the rustling grove.—
I will conduct thee—ha! Zopiron!

ZOPIRON enters.

Come,

Thou best of men, let me once more embrace thee.

Zop. Oh! speed thee hence—each moment's big with death—

Rbad. Farewell! farewell! when I've escap'd your camp,
Seek thou my brother; soothe his troubled spirit,
Explain these wonders; tell him Rhadamistus
Esteems and loves, and honours all his virtues.—

Farewell, Zopiron!—in Armenia's court
Thy king shall thank thy goodness—my Zenobia,
Oh! let me guide thee from this place of danger
To life, to love, to liberty, and joy. [Exit with Zen.

Zop. Lo! the Heavens smile with gentlest aspect on them!—

This calm serene that ev'ry planet sheds
To light their steps—this glad æthereal mildness
Is sure the token of incircling gods—
That hover anxious o'er the solemn scene!—

PHARASMANES enters; TIGRANES following.

Pbar. Let Teribazus streight attend our presence—

Tig. But now with glaring eye and fierce demeanour
He enter'd yonder tent—

Pbar. Bid him approach us.—

Then do thou round the midnight watch, and see
That Rome's ambassador has left my camp. [Exit Tig.
This war, Zopiron, shall be soon extinguish'd
In Roman blood, and yield Armenia to me.

Zop. Armenia, sir, still obstinately mourns
Lost Mithridates, father of his people.
Her hardy sons with one consenting voice
Demand a king from Rome ;—all leagu'd and sworn
Never to crouch beneath the conqu'ror's yoke.

Phar. But when the Roman eagle bites the ground,
They 'll shrink aghast, and own my sov'reign sway.

TERIBAZUS enters.

Phar. Thou base confed'rate with thy father's foes !
Ter. The accusation, sir,—if proof support it,
Gives you my forfeit life, and I resign it,
Freely resign—if destitute of proof,
It is a stab to honour—and the charge
Should not be lightly urg'd.—

Phar. This arrogance
That dictates to a father—

Ter. 'T is the spirit
Of injur'd innocence—if Pharasmanes
Suspect my truth—send me where danger calls ;
Bid me this moment carry death and slaughter
To rage in yonder camp ;—yes, then your son
Shall mark his hatred of the Roman name.

Phar. Hast thou not dar'd to thwart my tend'rest passion,
And to seduce my Ariana's love ?

Ter. And if this youthful heart, too prone to melt
At beauty's ray, receiv'd the gentle flame,
'T is past—the charm is o'er—no longer now
I walk a captive in her haughty triumph !—
In vain she now may call forth all her graces,
Instruct her eyes to roll with bidden fires,
And practise all the wonders of her face.
Ambition calls, and lights a nobler flame.

TIGRANES enters.

Tig. Th' ambassador of Rome, and that old traitor
The false Megistus——

Pbar. Speak ; unfold thy purpose.——

Tig. Together left the camp, and in their train
Bear Ariana with them——

Ter. Ariana !——

Have the slaves dar'd---detested treachery !
Now, now, my father, now approve my zeal.

Pbar. Haste, fly, pursue her ; bring the trait'ress back !---

Ter. My rapid vengeance shall o'ertake their flight ;
And bring the Roman plund'rer bound in chains. [Exit.]

Pbar. Do thou, Tigranes, with a chosen band
Circle yon hills, and intercept their march.
And thou, Zopiron, send my swiftest horse
To range the wood, and sweep along the vale.

[Exit Tigranes.]

Zop. Ye guardian deities, now lend your aid. [Exit.]

Pbar. [Alone.] Has the perfidious,---yet ador'd deceiver,
Thus has she left me ?---from a monarch's smile
Fled with a lawless ravager from Rome ?—
Oh ! give me vengeance ; give Flamminius to me,
That he may die in agony unheard of.
The trait'ress then---spite of each winning art,
Spite of her guilt---she triumphs in my heart.

ACT V. SCENE I.

Pbarasmanes.

Not yet return'd !---I'm tortur'd on the rack---
By heaven to-morrow's dawn---distracting thought !

Ere that the Roman ravager enjoys
Her heaven of bliss, and riots in delight.
My soul's on fire—this night I'll storm his camp
And dash his promis'd joys;—let loose my rage,

[*A flourish of trumpets.*]

And bury all in ruin—ha!—what means
This new alarm?—

TERIBAZUS, Soldiers, &c. enters.

Ter. The treach'rous slave is taken!
My speed outstripp'd him, and this arm that seiz'd
Hath well secur'd the traitor.—

Phar. Great revenge,
The measure of thy joys is full!—

Ter. At first
They made a feeble stand;—but hemm'd around
And close incircl'd by the sons of Asia
They saw death threat'ning at each javelin's point.
I rush'd upon Flamminius---much he courted
A secret parley, but my soul disdain'd
All further conf'rence---he and his complotter
The base Megistus, with the fair deserter
Re-measure back their steps, and clank their chains
In bitterness of heart.—

Phar. A father's thanks,
Shall well requite thee—lo! the traitors come.—

RHADAMISTUS, ZENOBIA, and MEGISTUS enter, in
Chains.

Phar. Thou base perfidious!---thou Italian plunderer!

Rhad. I do not mean to wage a war of words.—
Repent thee of this insult, of these chains
On him, who represents a people here.

Phar. Anon thou 'lt see how I respect that people.
My just revenge shall tell thee ; on thy head,
And thine, Megistus, sudden vengeance falls.

Meg. Alas ! worn out with age and misery
I long to lay me in the shroud of death.

Phar. I grant thy wish---what words, fair fugitive,
Can colour thy deceit ?—

Zen. The heart resolv'd
Wants no excuse, no colouring of words—
I found my husband,---flew to his embrace ;---
This,---this is he ! ---the lord of my desires—
With him content I 'll traverse o'er the world.

Phar. Do'st thou avow it too ?—

Zen. Do I avow it ?—
Yes, I exult, I glory in it.---Think'st thou
I 'll prove so meanly false to honour's cause
As to apologize for being faithful ?

Ter. I see Flamminiis has already school'd her
In Roman maxims—

Rhad. Miserable prince !
I will not answer thee—too soon thy heart
For this lastfeat will bitterly reproach thee !—

Ter. Away with thy delusive arts---if ever
I form alliance with haughty people,
Those ravagers of earth,—if e'er again
I hold communion with thee,---may the gods—
May Pharasmanes—but it cannot be—
My heart high beating in my country's cause,
Vows an eternal enmity with Rome.

[Exit.]

Rhad. Thee, Pharasmanes, thee my voice addresses---
Thou know'st my title to her---Hymen's rites
Long since united both---Then loose these chains ;---
'T is in the name of Rome I ask it—

Phar. Slave!—

Thy title, by the rights of war, is now extinguish'd.—
Captivity dissolves her former ties,
And now the laws of arms have made her mine.

Zen. And are there laws to change the human heart?
To alter the affections of the soul?

Know that my heart is rul'd by other laws,
The laws of truth, of honour, and of love.

This is my husband! source of all my comfort!
With him I'll live—with him will dare to die!—

Phar. By heaven some mystery—thou treach'rous fair!
Mark well my words—unfold thy birth and rank—
My mind uncertain wanders in conjecture—
Who and what art thou?—Vain is ev'ry guess—
Resolve my doubts, or else the Roman's doom
Shall be determin'd straight—

Zen. And my resolve,
Tyrant, is fix'd to share my husband's fate.
That I unfold—that sentiment reveal—
To Heaven and earth reveal it—for the rest
Guess if you can—determine if you dare.

Phar. Quick, drag Flamminius hence—

Rhad. Slaves, hold your hands—
My character protects me here—

Phar. Dispatch,
Instant dispatch, and seize Megistus too—

[Megistus is led off.]

Zen. Horror! call back the word—it shall not be—
Here will I hold him—barb'rous ruffians hold—
Murder!—my life! my lord! my husband! oh!—

[Rhadamistus is dragged off.]

Phar. Give him the torture; let your keenest pangs
Extort each secret from him—

Zen. Pharasmanes!

Thus lowly humbl'd, prostrate in the dust,
Washing your feet with tears—have mercy!—this
Will be the blackest, worst of all your murders—

Phar. There's but one way to mitigate his doom—

Zen. Give me to know it—spare him—spare his life—

Phar. Abjure the slave, and by connubial vows
This instant make thee partner of my throne.

Zen. My faith, my love, my very life is his—
My child is his—oh! think thou see'st my infant
Lifting his little hands—

Phar. I'll hear no more—

Or yield this moment, or the traitor dies.

[Exit Pharasmanes.]

Zen. [Alone.] Inhuman tyrant!—madness seize my
brain—

Swallow me, earth—here shall these desp'rate hands
Strike on thy flinty bosom---here my voice
Pierce to thy centre---till with pity touch'd
Your caverns open wide to hide a wretch
From hated men---from misery like this.

TERIBAZUS enters.

Afflicted mourner, raise thee from the earth.

Zen. What voice is that---I know thee well---thou art
That fiend accurst, the murd'rous Teribazus!—

Yes, thou art welcome! [Rising.] thou delight'st in blood---
I am your willing victim---plunge your sword
Deep in my heart—I'll thank thee for the stroke,
Since thou hast murder'd all my soul held dear.

Ter. Assuage this storm of grief, nor blame a lover
That dotes like me---could I behold that form
Snatch'd from my arms?

Zen. You know not what you've done—
Your blameless brother—

Ter. How!

Zen. You've murder'd him—
Your brother Rhadamistus—

Ter. Rhadamistus!

Zen. By thee he dies---that is your splendid deed—
Ter. What say'st thou?—he my brother---urge me not
To instant madness---is he---tell me---say—

Art thou Zenobia?

Zen. Yes, that fatal wretch!—

Ter. If this be so—what had I done, ye Powers!

To merit this extremity of woe—

Why didst thou hide the awful secret from me?

Zen. Could I betray him---could I trust your father,
Whose fell ambition, whose relentless rage,
Has fix'd a price on our devoted heads?

Ter. Then shall this hated being---no!---I'll live
To save a brother still---he shall not die—
Oh! let me seek him---throw me at his feet,
Implore forgiveness, and protract his days. [*Exit Teribazus.*]

Zen. It is in vain---he's lost---we both must perish—
And then my child---who then shall guard his youth?
No more these eyes shall see him---my sweet boy
Will break his heart, and unregarded die.

ZOPIRON enters.

Zop. All's lost! all ruin'd!—to the cave of death
Ev'n now the guards lead Rhadamistus forth.

Zen. Thou seest the sad reverse!—immortal spirits—
Ye winged virtues—that with pitying eye
Watch the afflicted—will ye not inspire
In this sad hour—one great, one glorious thought,

Above the vulgar flight of common souls,
To save at once my husband and my child?—
The inspiration comes!—the bright idea
Expands my heart, and charms my glowing soul.

Zop. My gracious queen, let not a blind despair—

Zen. Talk not, Zopiron, when the god inspires!
The god! the god!—my heart receives him all—
My lord, my Rhadamistus still shall live. [Exit.]

Zop. Yet I conjure thee, hear thy faithful slave.—

[Follows her out.]

RHADAMISTUS and Guards enter.

Rhad. Say, whither do you lead me?—does your tyrant
Repent his horrid outrage?

TERIBAZUS enters.

Guards withdraw

To a remoter ground—

[Exeunt Soldiers.]

Rhad. Mistaken prince!

My heart bleeds for thee—

Ter. Oh! too well I know

The depth of guilt in which the fates have plung'd me.

I cannot look upon thee—

Rhad. Oh! my brother,

Thus let me, ev'n in ruin, thus embrace thee—

Ter. Dost thou forgive me?—could I e'er have thought
To see thee here? my rashness has undone thee!—

Rhad. No, thou art innocent—the guilt is mine,

The guilt of mean, ungen'rous policy

Of selfish wisdom, disingenuous art

That from a friend kept back the fatal secret,

When with the ardour of unbounded confidence,

I should have rush'd with transport to thy arms,

Unbosom'd all, and wrapt thee in my heart.

Ter. Alas ! I've heap'd these horrors on your head—
I've seal'd thy doom—that is a brother's gift—
The first essay of Teribazus' friendship—
But I am doom'd to be a wretch abhor'd,
Of men and gods abhor'd !—doom'd like my father
To drench these murd'rous hands in brother's blood !

Rhad. Imbitter not the pangs that rive my soul—
Where is Zenobia ?—unrelenting powers !
Was it for this your persecuting wrath
Gave me to meet her, gave that angel-sweetness
To these delighted eyes—these eager arms ?

Ter. I'll give you freedom still---by Heaven I will !—

Rhad. Was she but given me to afflict her more ?
To wake in that dear breast a gleam of joy,
A mockery of joy---joy scarce, ye powers !
Divided by the moment of delight
From black despair, from agony and death ?

Ter. I will protect her—will restore her to thee,
Or do a deed shall strike mankind with horror !
Not ev'n a father shall retard my sword—
In his own blood I'll drench it.

Rhad. Ha !—

Ter. This hand,
Ere thou shalt fall a victim to his fury,
Shall to the heart—th' inhuman heart of him—
Who dares—

Rhad. No more of that---can I consent,
That a brave gen'rous youth, a much lov'd brother,
For ev'ry virtue fam'd---shall thus debase
By an atrocious deed his fair renown,
And perpetrate a dark insidious work ?
Oh ! I should well deserve the worst of ills—
I then should justify a father's cruelty !

Ter. He has undone thee---has undone us all---
 But yet thou shalt not die---by Heaven I swear---
 Yes, take me, horror ! pour into my heart
 Thy blackest purpose---nerve my lifted arm
 To dash him headlong from his glitt'ring throne
 A terrible example to the world !

Rhad. Beware, beware, my brother---yet reflect---
 You would strike vice with terror---tell me then,
 Would not the act of rash impetuous zeal,
 Would not th' example arm the ruffian's hand ?
 Thy virtue thus inflames thy gen'rous ardour---
 But oh ! my brother, let it not be said
 That virtue ever held the murderer's knife !

Ter. Gods ! have I ruin'd such unheard of goodness ?
 Swift I'll dispatch a message to Paulinus,
 And call his legions to assault the camp---

TIGRANES and Guards enter.

Tig. Guards, seize your prisoner---in a dungeon's gloom
 Plunge him sequester'd from the light of Heaven.
 'Tis Pharasmanes' will---

Ter. Thou meddling fiend !
 I will attend his steps ; will still protect him
 From men like thee---

Rhad. Should Pharasmanes dare
 To violate the rights of public law,
 Rome is at hand, and will have ample vengeance.

[Exit with Teribazus.

Tig. My thirst of vengeance shall be sated first.
 Yes, guard him, prince ; it makes thy ruin sure !
 Thy Ariana too, while fate is busy,
 Shall meet her doom, and leave my road to glory
 All smooth and level to ambition's wish.

ZOPIRON enters.

Zop. 'Gainst Rome's ambassador the king, Tigranes,
Suspends his sentence till his further orders.
The queen commands it too.

Tig. The queen!—What queen?

Zop. The beauteous Ariana; now your sovereign.

Tig. Has she relented? Is she married to him?

Zop. She is—the scene with various passions burn'd!—
Her tresses all-unbound, with faded charms,
Yet lovely ev'n in sorrow, thro' the ranks
Eager she flew, with shrieks, with outstretch'd arms,
Invoking ev'ry god!—the wond'ring soldier
With soften'd sinews, dropt the sword to earth
And gaz'd with mix'd emotions as she pass'd.
Prone to the ground of Pharasmanes' feet
She fell—he rais'd her soon, and smil'd consent—
To the king's tent she press'd with eager speed—
Th' exulting monarch call'd his priests around him,
And soon with solemn march and festive song
In his pavilion sought the blooming bride.

Tig. This sudden change, Zopiron, this rash haste,
I like it not—

Zop. Nor I, Tigranes: doubt,
Suspicion, fear, and wonder, and mistrust,
Rise in each anxious thought—

Tig. But didst thou see
The ceremony clos'd?

Zop. I did:—at first
All pale and trembling Ariana stood.
Then more collected, with undaunted step
She to the altar bore the nuptial cup.
There reverent bow'd, and 'hear, ye gods,' she said,

' Hear, and record the purpose of my soul.'
 With trembling lips then kiss'd the sacred vase,
 And as our country's solemn rites require,
 Drank of the hallow'd liquor. From her hand
 The king receiv'd it, and with eager joy,
 As to his soul he took the nectar'd draught,
 With stedfast eye she viewed him, whilst a smile
 Of sickly joy gleam'd faintly o'er her visage.

Tig. Well, she's our queen—the diadem is her's.

Zop. How long to wear it, Heaven alone can tell.

SCENE II.

Draws and discovers the King's Pavilion, with an Altar, and Fire blazing on it; soft Music is played, PHARASMANES and ZENOBIA come forward.

Pbar. At length my Ariana's soft compliance
 Endears the present bliss, and gives an earnest
 Of joy to brighten a long train of years.

Zen. Alas! fond man expatiates oft in fancy,
 Unconscious of the fates, and oft in thought
 Anticipates a bliss he ne'er enjoys.

Pbar. Away with gloomy care; for thou art mine,
 Thou Ariana!—all our future days
 Shall smile with gay, with ever-young desire,
 And not a cloud o'ercast the bright serene.

Zen. And does thy penetrating eye pervade
 What time has yet in store?

Pbar. Why dost thou ask?

Zen. I have been us'd to grief—release the Roman,
 And give him hence safe conduct to his friends;—
 I then shall be at peace.—

Phar. Beware, beware !
Nor rouze again the pangs that fire a soul,
Which fiercely dotes like mine.

Zen. Dismiss him hence ;
Give him his life—it was your marriage vow
He should not suffer—let me see him first ;
Grant me one interview—one little hour ;
In that poor space I can crowd all that's left me
Of love and tenderness, and fond concern,
Before we part for ever——

Phar. Fond concern !
And love, and tenderness !——and shall the Roman
Usurp a monarch's due ?—that look betrays
The secret workings of a heart estrang'd !
And shall the man who dares dispute my love,
Shall the slave breathe a moment?—haste, Tigranes,
And see immediate execution on him. [Exit Tig.

Zen. Oh ! stay, Tigranes—barb'rous man, recall
The horrid mandate——

Phar. By immortal love,
I see the slave still triumphs in your heart.

Zen. Oh ! spare him, spare him—by the vital air,
By your own promis'd faith—— [Kneels to him.

Phar. Since lov'd by thee
His doom is doubly seal'd.——

Zen. You shall not fly me——
Now tear me, drag me groveling in the dust,
Tear off these hands—tear, tear me piece-meal first—

Phar. Nay, then since force must do it——[Shakes her off.
Zen. Barb'rous tyrant ! [She lies stretch'd on the ground.

Phar. I go to see the minion of your heart
Expire in pangs before me—ha !—what means
This more than winter's frost that chills my veins ?—

Zen. [Looking up.] That groan revives, and calls me back to life!

Pbar. I cannot move—each vital function's lost—
The purple current of my blood is stopt---
I freeze---I burn---oh ! 'tis the stroke of death---

[Falls on the ground.]

Zen. [Rising.] Yes, tyrant, yes ; it is the stroke of death
And I inflict it——
I have done it all——

Pbar. Pernicious trait'ress ! thou !——

Zen. My vengeance did it.——
Zenobia's vengeance ! ---'t is Zenobia strikes——
Zenobia executes her justice on thee !——

Pbar. Oh ! dire accurst event ! ---art thou Zenobia !

Zen. Yes, thou fell monster, know me for Zenobia !
Know the ambassador is Rhadamistus !
Haste thee, Zopiron, and proclaim him king.

[Exit Zopiron.]

Pbar. May curses light upon thee---oh ! I die,
And racks and wheels disjoint me——

Zen. Writhe in torment,
In fiercer pangs than my dear father knew.—
But I revenge his death---I dash'd the cup
With precious poison ! ---[A flourish of Trumpets.] Ha ! now,
tyrant, wake,

And hear those sounds---my Rhadamistus reigns !—

Pbar. What, and no help ! ---it is too late---the fates,
The fiends surround me---more than *A&tina*'s fires
Burn in my veins---yet Heaven---no---'t is in vain—
I cannot rise---my crimes---my tenfold crimes—
They pull me ! ---oh !——

[Dies.]

Zen. There fled the guilty spirit,
Shade of my father view your daughter now !
Behold her struggling in a righteous cause !

Behold her conqu'ring in the tyrant's camp !
 Behold your murd'rer levell'd in the dust !—

[A second flourish of trumpets.]

Rhad. [Within the scenes.] Where is Zenobia ?

Zen. Rhadamistus here !—

RHADAMISTUS, TERIBAZUS, MEGISTUS, and ZOPIRON
 enter.

Rhad. Oh ! let me, let me thus—thus pour my soul,
 Thus speak my joy—thus melt within thy arms.

Zen. My lord ! my life ! my Rhadamistus !—come,
 Grow to my heart, that bounds and springs to meet thee.

Rhad. Once more reviv'd and snatch'd again from death,
 Thus do I see thee ?—these are speechless joys,
 And tears alone express them.—

Zen. Have I sav'd thee ?
 All-gracious gods ! 't is rapture in the extreme !

Rhad. My sweet deliv'rer ! my all of bliss !—
 Zen. Oh ! it is joy too exquisite !—and yet
 Grief will embitter ecstasy like this !—
 There lies your father !

Rhad. All his crimes
 Be buried with him !—nature will have way,
 And o'er his corse thus sheds the filial tear.

Ter. Oh ! that my tears could wash away his stains !

Zen. Wilt thou forgive his murderer ?

Rhad. For thee,
 Beset with wrongs, and injur'd as thou wert,
 In ev'ry region fame shall clap her wings,
 And the recording muse applaud thy virtue.

Zen. If thou forgiv'st me I am bless'd indeed !
 Now we shall part no more.—Megistus too !
 Thou good old man !—let me embrace thee—ha !

Meg. The blood forsakes her cheek—her eyes are fix'd!

Zen. Support me—help me—oh! I die—I die.

[Falls in Megistus' arms.]

Rhad. She faints—her colour dies—revive, Zenobia;
Revive, my love; thy Rhadamistus thus,
Thus calls your flutt'ring spirit back to life.

Zen. It will not be—the toil of life is o'er—
My Rhadamistus—

[Sinks down on the ground.]

Rhad. Must I lose thee, then?

Zen. Oh! the envenom'd cup! the marriage rites
Requir'd that I should drink it first myself—
There was no other way—I did it freely
To save thy life—to save thee for my child.

Rhad. Art thou a victim for a wretch like me?
Is there no antidote to stop the course
Of this vile poison?

Zen. None—it rages now—
It rages through my veins—my eyes grow dim—
They're lost in darkness!—Oh! I cannot see thee—
Where art thou, Rhadamistus?—Must I breathe
Longer in life, and never see thee more?
And are my eyes forbid one dear farewell?
Oh! cruel stars!—must they not fix on thee
The last expiring glance?

Rhad. Relentless powers!
There lies Zenobia!—round that pallid beauty
Call your æthereal host, each winged virtue,
Call ev'ry angel down; bid 'em behold
That matchless excellence, and then refuse
Soft pity if they can!

Zen. Megistus—seek my child—
And bring him to his father—Rhadamistus,
Wilt thou protect him?—My sweet orphan-babe
I leave thee too!—oh! train him up in virtue—

Wilt thou be fond of him—a mother's fondness
My child should meet—oh ! raise me, Rhadamistus—
Give me thy hand—my little infant—oh !— [Dies.]

Rhad. Tears, you do well to stop—your wretched drops
Are unavailing at a sight like this !—
And art thou gone ?—ah ! thus defac'd and pale,
Thus do I see thee ?—is that ghastly form
All that is left me of thee ?—give me daggers,
Give me some instant means of death, my friends,
That I may throw this load of life away,
And let our hearts be both inurn'd together.

Ter. Live, live, my brother, for your infant son—
Let him prevail—

Rhad. Inhuman that thou art !

Think you I'll stay imprison'd here in life,
When there---behold her-- how she smiles in death!—
When there that form---think ye I'll linger here ?---
Dead, dead, Zenobia ?---still I have thee thus—
You ne'er shall part us——this at least I'll hold,
And cling for ever to these pale, pale charms ;
Here breathe my last, and faithful still in death,
Love shall unite us in one peaceful grave.

Meg. Now, old Megistus, gods ! has liv'd too long !

Ter. Bring ev'ry aid, all medicinal skill,
To call a wretched brother back to life,
And give each lenient balm to woes like his.

*From thee ambition, what misfortunes flow ?
To thee what varied ills weak mortals owe ?
'Twas this for years laid desolate the land,
And arm'd against a son the father's hand ;
To black despair poor lost Zenobia drove
The hapless victim of disastrous love ! [Exeunt omnes.]*

EPILOGUE.

Written by DAVID GARRICK, Esq.—Spoken by Mrs. ABINGTON.

[She peeps through the Curtain.]

HOW do you all, good folks? In tears for certain,
I'll only take a PEEP BEHIND THE CURTAIN.
You're all so full of tragedy, and sadness!
For me to come among ye, would be madness:
This is no time for giggling—when you've leisure,
Call out for me, and I'll attend your pleasure;
As soldiers hurry at the beat of drum,
Beat but your hands, that instant I will come.

[She enters upon their clapping.

This is so good, to call me out so soon—
The COMIC MUSE by me intreats a BOON;
She call'd for PRITCHARD, her first maid of honour,
And begg'd of her to take the task upon her;
But she—I'm sure you'll all be sorry for 't,
Resigns her place, and soon retires from court:
To bear this loss, we courtiers make a shift,
When good folks leave us, worse may have a lift.

The COMIC MUSE, whose ev'ry smile is grace,
And her STAGE SISTER, with her tragic face,
Have had a quarrel—each has writ a CASE.
And on their friends assembled now I wait,
To give you of THEIR DIFFERENCE A TRUE STATE.
MELPOMENE complains when she appears—
For five good acts, in all her pomp of tears,

To raise your souls, and with her raptures wing 'em,
 Nay, wet your handkerchiefs, that you may wring 'em.
 Some flippant bussey, like myself, comes in;
 Crack goes her fan, and with a giggling grin,
 Hey! PRESTO PASS!—all topsy turvy see,
 For HO, HO, HO! is chang'd to HE, HE, HE!
 We own the fault, but 't is a fault in vogue,
 'Tis theirs, who call and bawl for—EPILOGUE!
 O! shame upon you—for the time to come,
 Know better—and go miserable home.
 What says our COMIC GODDESS?—with reproaches,
 She vows her SISTER TRAGEDY encroaches!
 And spite of all her virtue and ambition,
 Is known to have an amorous disposition:
 For in FALSE DELICACY—wondrous sly,
 Join'd with a certain IRISHMAN—O, fye!
 She made you, when you ought to laugh, to cry—
 Her sister's smiles with tears she try'd to smother,
 Rais'd such a tragi-comic kind of pother,
 You laugh'd with one eye, while you cry'd with t' other.
 What can be done?—sad work behind the scenes!
 There comic females scold with tragic queens.
 Each party different ways the foe assails,
 These shake their daggers, those prepare their nails.
 'Tis you alone must calm these dire mishaps,
 Or we shall still continue pulling caps.
 What is your will?—I read it in your faces;
 That all hereafter take their proper places,
 Shake hands, and kiss and friends, and—BURN THEIR
 CASES. 7 JU 52

SCENE

7 JU 52

THE
WAY OF THE WORLD.

A

COMEDY.

BY WILLIAM CONGREVE, ESQ.

ADAPTED FOR
THEATRICAL REPRESENTATION,
AS PERFORMED AT
THE THEATRE ROYAL, COVENT-GARDEN.

REGULATED FROM THE PROMPT-BOOK,

By Permission of the Manager.

The Lines distinguished by inverted Commas, are omitted in the Representation; and those printed in Italics are the Additions of the Theatre.

LONDON:

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George C. Country, 22 High Street, Alton,
Essex. Tel. 2222

WILLIAM CONGREVE, ESQ.

THIS Gentleman was born in the year 1674, at a place called Bardsa, near Leeds, in Yorkshire, being part of the estate of Sir John Lewis, his great-uncle by his mother's side; and was descended from the ancient family of the Congreves, of Congreve in Staffordshire, his father being second son to Richard Congreve of that place.

Early in life our Author accompanied his father to Ireland, who being only a younger brother, was provided for in the army by a commission on that establishment, and compelled to undertake a journey thither in consequence of his command; which he afterwards parted with, to accept of the management of a considerable estate belonging to the Burlington Family, which fixed his residence there.

However, though he suffered his son William to receive his first tincture of letters in the great school at Kilkenny, and afterwards to complete his classical learning under the direction of Dr. Ash, in the university of Dublin, yet, being desirous that his studies should be directed to profit as well as improvement, he sent him over to England soon after the Revolution, and placed him as a student in the Temple.—The dry, plodding study of the law, however, was by no means suitable to the sprightly volatile genius of Mr. Congreve, and therefore, though he did not want approbation in those studies to which his genius led him, yet he did not even attempt to make any proficiency in a service which he was probably conscious he should make no figure in. Excellence and perfection were what, it is apparent, he laid down as his principle, from the very first, to make it his aim the acquiring; for, in the very earliest emanation of his genius, and a very early one indeed it was, viz. his Novel, called

Love and Duty reconciled, written when he was not above seventeen years of age, he had not only endeavoured at, but indeed succeeded in, the presenting to the world, not a mere novel according to taste and fashion then prevailing, but a piece which should point out and be in itself a model of what novels ought to be. And though this cannot itself be called with propriety a dramatic work, yet he has so strictly adhered to dramatic rules in the composition of it, that his arriving at so great a degree of perfection in the regular drama in so short a time afterwards, is hardly to be wondered at.

His first play was the Old Bachelor, and was the amusement of some leisure hours, during a slow recovery from a fit of illness, soon after his return to England, and was in itself so perfect, that Mr. Dryden, on its being shewn to him, declared he had never in his life seen such a first play; and that great poet having, in conjunction with Mr. Southerne and Arthur Maynwaring, Esq. given it a slight revisal, the manager of Drury-Lane Theatre brought it on the stage in 1693, where it met with such universal approbation, that Mr. Congreve, though he was but nineteen years of age at the time of his writing it, became now considered as a prop to the declining stage, and a rising genius in dramatic poetry.

The next year he produced the Double Dealer, which, for what reason, however, I know not, did not meet with so much success as the former. The merit of his first play, however, had obtained him the favour and patronage of Lord Halifax, and some peculiar marks of distinction from Queen Mary, on whose death, which happened in the close of this year, he wrote a very elegant elegiac pastoral.

In 1695, when Betterton opened the new house in Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, Mr. Congreve joining with him, gave him his comedy of Love for Love, with which the company opened their campaign, and which met with such success,

that they immediately offered the author a share in the profits of the house, on condition of his furnishing them with one play yearly. This offer he accepted of; but whether through indolence, or that correctness which he looked on as necessary to his works, his Mourning Bride did not come out till 1697, nor his Way of the World till two years after that. The indifferent success this play, though an exceeding good one, met from the public, completed that disgust to the theatre, which a long contest with Jeremy Collier, who had attacked the immoralities of the English stage, and more especially some of his pieces, had begun, and he determined never more to write for the stage. This resolution he punctually kept, and Mr. Dennis's observation on that point will, I am afraid, be found but too true, when he said, "that Mr. Congreve quitted the "stage early, and that comedy left it with him." Yet, though he quitted dramatic writing, he did not lay down the pen entirely; but occasionally wrote many little pieces both in prose and verse, all of which stand on the records of literary fame.

It is very possible, however, that he might not so soon have given way to this disgust, had not the easiness of his circumstances rendered any subservience to the opinions and caprice of the town absolutely unnecessary to him. For his abilities having very early in life introduced him to the acquaintance of the Earl of Halifax, who was then the Mæcenas of the age; that nobleman, desirous of raising so promising a genius above the necessity of too hasty productions, made him one of the commissioners for licensing hackney-coaches. He soon after bestowed on him a place in the pipe-office, and not long after that gave him a post in the customs, worth six hundred pounds per annum.

On the 14th of November 1714, he was appointed commissioner of wine-licences, and on the 17th of December in the same year, was nominated secretary of Jamaica, so that, with all together, his income towards the latter part of his

life was upwards of twelve hundred pounds a year. Thus exalted above dependence, it is no wonder he would not longer render himself subject to the capricious censures of impotent critics. And had his poetical father, Mr. Dryden, ever been raised to the same circumstances, it is probable that his *All for Love* would not now have been esteemed the best of his dramatic pieces.

But to return to Congreve. The greatest part of the last twenty years of his life was spent in ease and retirement; and he either did not, or affected not to give himself any trouble about reputation. Yet some part of that conduct might proceed from a degree of pride. T. Cibber, in his *Lives of the Poets*, vol. iv. page 93. relates an anecdote of him, which I cannot properly omit here. "When the celebrated Voltaire, "says he) was in England, he waited upon Congreve, and "passed him some compliments as to the reputation and "merit of his works. Congreve thanked him, but at the same "time told that ingenious foreigner, *He did not choose to be considered as an author, but only as a private gentleman, and in that light expected to be visited.* Voltaire answered, *That if he had never been any thing but a private gentleman, in all probability, he had never been troubled with that visit.* And observes in his own account of the transaction, that he was "not a little disgusted with so unseasonable a piece of vanity."

Towards the close of his life he was much afflicted with the gout, and with blindness, when making a tour to Bath, for the benefit of the waters, he was unfortunately overturned in his chariot, by which it is supposed he got some inward bruise, as he ever after complained of a pain in his side, and on his return to London continued gradually declining in his health, till the 19th of Jan. 1729, when he died, at his house in Surry-street, in the Strand, and on the 26th following, was buried in Westminster-Abbey, the pall being supported by persons of the first distinction.

His dramatic pieces are seven in number, and their titles as follow :

1. Old Bachelor. C. 4to. 1693.
 2. Double Dealer. C. 4to. 1694.
 3. Love for Love. C. 4to. 1695.
 4. Mourning Bride. T. 4to. 1697.
 5. Way of the World. C. 4to. 1700.
 6. Judgment of Paris. Masq. 4to. 1701.
 7. Semele. O. 4to. 1707.
-
-

PROLOGUE.

*OF those few fools who with ill stars are curst,
Sure scribbling fools, call'd poets, fare the worst :
For they're a set of fools which Fortune makes,
And after she has made 'em fools, forsakes.
With Nature's oafs 't is quite a different case,
For Fortune favours all her ideot-race :
In her own nest the cuckoo-eggs we find,
O'er which she broods to batch the changeling-kind.
No portion for her own she has to spare,
So much she doats on her adopted care.*

*Poets are bubbles, by the town drawn in,
Suffer'd at first some trifling stakes to win :
But what unequal hazards do they run !
Each time they write, they venture all they've won :
The 'squire that's butter'd still is sure to be undone.
This author, heretofore, has found your favour ;
But pleads no merit from his past behaviour.
To build on that might prove a vain presumption,
Should grants, to poets made, admit resumption :
And in Parnassus he must lose his seat,
If that be found a forfeited estate.*

*He owns with toil he wrote the following scenes ;
But, if they're nought, ne'er spare him for his pains :
Damn him the more ; have no commiseration
For dulness on mature deliberation.
He swears he'll not resent one hiss'd-off scene,
Nor, like those peevish wits, his play maintain,
Who, to assert their sense, your taste arraign.*

*Some plot we think he has, and some new thought :
Some humour too, no farce ; but that 's a fault.
Satire, he thinks, you ought not to expect ;
For so reform'd a town, who dares correct ?
To please, this time, has been his sole pretence ;
He 'll not instruct, lest it should give offence.
Should he by chance a knave or fool expose,
That hurts none here, sure here are none of those.
In short, our play shall (with your leave to shew it)
Give you one instance of a passive poet,
Who to your judgments yields all resignation,
To save or damn, after your own discretion*

Dramatis Personae.

COVENT-GARDEN.

Men.

FAINALL in love with Mrs. Marwood, - Mr. Farren.
MIRABELL, in love with Mrs. Millamant Mr. Holman.
WITWOULD, } Followers of Mrs. { Mr. Lewis.
PETULANT, } Millamant,* - - { Mr. Ryder.
Sir WILFUL WITWOULD, Half-brother to
 Witwould, - - - - - Mr. King.
WAITWELL, Servant to Mirabell, - - Mr. Quick.

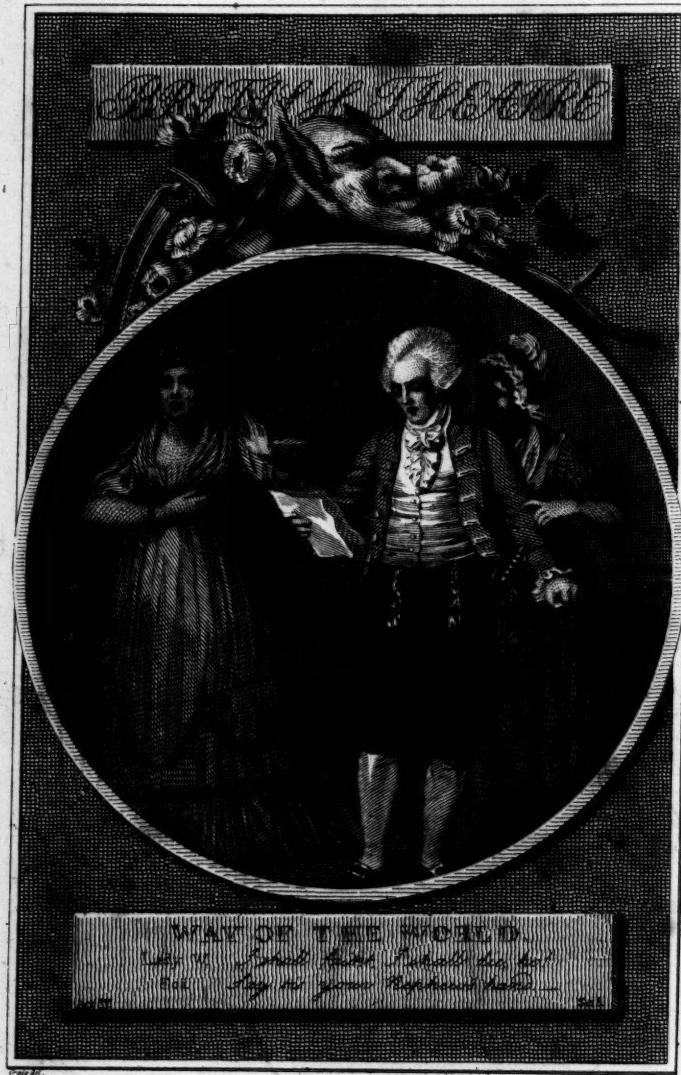
Women.

Lady WISHFORT, enemy to Mirabell, - Mrs. Webb.
Mrs. Millamant, a fine Lady, Niece to
 Lady Wishfort, and loves Mirabell, Mrs. Abington.
Mrs. Marwood, friend to Mr. Fainall, and
 likes Mirabell, - - - - - Mrs. Mattocks.
Mrs. Fainall, Daughter to Lady Wishfort, Miss Chapman.
FOIBLE, Woman to Lady Wishfort, - Miss Stuart.
MINGING, Woman to Mrs. Millamant, - Mrs. Platt.

Footman, and Attendants.

Scene, London---*The Time equal to that of the Representation.*

7 JU 52



London Printed by C. Cawthron British Library Strand July 5 1796.

Act III.

WAY OF THE WORLD.

Sc. I.



Robert's Print.

P. Dawson, Sculpt.

MISS DE CAMP as FOIBLE.

Foible. So much has been before-hand with me —

London Printed by G. Cawthorn British Library Strand July 5 1795.

7 JU 52



THE
WAY OF THE WORLD.

ACT I. SCENE I.

A Chocolate House. MIRABELL and FAINALL rising from Cards. BETTY waiting.

Mirabell.

You are a fortunate man, Mr. Fainall.

Fain. Have we done?

Mira. What you please. I'll play on to entertain you.

Fain. No, I'll give you your revenge another time, when you are not so indifferent, you are thinking of something else now, and play too negligently; the coldness of a losing gamester, lessens the pleasure of the winner. I'd no more play with a man that slighted his ill-fortune, than I'd make love to a woman who undervalued the loss of her reputation.

Mira. You have a taste extremely delicate, and are for refining on your pleasures.

Fain. Pr'ythee, why so reserved? something has put you out of humour.

Mira. Not at all: I happen to be grave to-day; and you are gay; that's all.

Fain. Confess, Millamant and you quarrelled last night, after I left you; my fair cousin has some humours that

would tempt the patience of a Stoick.—What, some coxcomb came in, and was well received by her, while you were by?

Mira. Witwould and Petulant? and what was worse, her aunt, your wife's mother, my evil genius; or, to sum up all in her own name, my old Lady Wishfort came in—

Fain. O there it is then—She has a lasting passion for you, and with reason—What, then my wife was there?

Mira. Yes, and Mrs. Marwood, and three or four more, whom I never saw before; seeing me, they all put on their grave faces, whispered one to another; then complain'd aloud of the vapours, and after fell into a profound silence.

Fain. They had a mind to be rid of you.

Mira. For which reason I resolved not to stir. At last the good old lady broke through her painful taciturnity, with an invective against long visits. I would not have understood her, but Millamant joining in the argument, I rose, and with a constrain'd smile told her, I thought nothing was so easy as to know when a visit began to be troublesome; she redden'd and I withdrew, without expecting her reply.

Fain. You were to blame to resent what she spoke only in compliance with her aunt.

Mira. She is more mistress of herself than to be under the necessity of such resignation.

Fain. What! though half her fortune depends upon her marrying with my lady's approbation?

Mira. I was then in such a humour, that I should have been better pleased if she had been less discreet.

Fain. Now I remember, I wonder not they were weary of you; last night was one of their cabal nights—they have 'em three times a week, and meet by turns, at one another's apartments, where they come together like the coroner's inquest, to sit upon the murdered reputations of the week.

You and I are excluded; and it was once proposed that all the male sex should be excepted; but somebody moved, that to avoid scandal there might be one man of the community; upon which motion Witwould and Petulant were enrolled members.

Mira. And who may have been the foundress of this sect? My Lady Wishfort, I warrant, who publishes her detestation of mankind; and full of the vigour of fifty-five, declares for a friend and Ratafia; and let posterity shift for itself, "she 'll breed no more."

Fain. The discovery of your sham addresses to her, to conceal your love to her niece, has provoked this separation: had you dissembled better, things might have continued in the state of nature.

Mira. I did as much as man could, with any reasonable conscience; I proceeded to the very last act of flattery with her, and was guilty of a song in her commendation. Nay, I got a friend to put her into a lampoon, and compliment her with the addresses of "an affair with" a young fellow; "which I carried so far, that I told her the malicious town "took notice that she was grown fat of a sudden; and when "she lay in of a dropsy, persuaded her she was reported to "be in labour." The devil's in't if an old woman is to be flattered farther, "unless a man should endeavour down- "right personally to debauch her;—and that my virtue for- "bad me." But for the discovery of this amour, I am indebted to your friend, or your wife's friend, Mrs. Marwood.

Fain. What should provoke her to be your enemy, unless she has made you advances which you have slighted? Women do not easily forgive omissions of that nature.

Mira. She was always civil to me, till of late; I confess I am not one of those coxcombs who are apt to interpret a woman's good manners to her prejudice; and think that

she who does not refuse 'em every thing, can refuse 'em nothing.

Fain. You are a gallant man, Mirabell ; and though you may have cruelty enough, not to answer a lady's advances, you have too much generosity, not to be tender of her honour. Yet you speak with an indifference which seems to be affected ; and confesses you are conscious of a negligence.

Mira. You pursue the argument with a distrust that seems to be unaffected, and confesses you are conscious of a concern for which the lady is more indebted to you, than is your wife.

Fain. Fy, fy, friend, if you grow censorious, I must leave you ;—I 'll look upon the gamesters in the next room.

Mira. Who are they ?

Fain. Petulant and Witwould—Bring me some chocolate.

[Exit.]

Mira. Betty, what says your clock ?

Betty. Turn'd of the last canonical hour, sir.

Mira. How pertinently the jade answers me ! ha ! almost one o'clock ! [Looking at his watch.] O, y'are come——

A Footman enters.

Well ; is the grand affair over ? You have been something tedious.

Foot. Sir, there's such coupling at Pancras, that they stand behind one another, as 't were in a country dance. Ours was the last couple to lead up ; and no hopes appearing of dispatch, besides, the parson growing hoarse, we were afraid his lungs would have failed before it came to our turn ; so we drove round to Duke's-Place ; and there they were rivetted in a trice.

Mira. So, so, you are sure they are married.

Foot. Incontestably, sir : I am witness.

Mira. Have you the certificate?

Foot. Here it is, sir.

Mira. Has the taylor brought Waitwell's clothes home, and the new liveries?

Foot. Yes, sir.

Mira. That's well. Do you go home again, d'ye hear, "and adjourn the consummation till farther order;" bid Waitwell shake his ears, and dame Partlet rustle up her feathers, and meet me at one o'clock by Rosamond's pond; that I may see her before she returns to her lady; and as you tender your ears be secret. [Exit Footman.

FAINALL enters.

Fain. Joy of your success, Mirabell; you look pleased.

Mira. Ay; I have been engaged in a matter of some sort of mirth, which is not yet ripe for discovery. I am glad this is not a cabal-night. I wonder, Fainall, that you who are married, and of consequence should be discreet, will suffer your wife to be of such a party.

Fain. Faith, I am not jealous. Besides, most who are engaged, are women and relations; and for the men, they are of a kind too contemptible to give scandal.

Mira. I am of another opinion. The greater the coxcomb, always the more the scandal: for a woman who is not a fool, can have but one reason for associating with a man who is one.

Fain. Are you jealous as often as you see Witwould entertain'd by Millamant?

Mira. Of her understanding I am, if not of her person.

Fain. You do her wrong; for to give her her due she has wit.

Mira. She has beauty enough to make any man think so;

and complaisance enough not to contradict him who shall tell her so.

Fain. For a passionate lover, methinks, you are a man somewhat too discerning in the failings of your mistress.

Mira. And for a discerning man, somewhat too passionate a lover; for I like her with all her faults; nay like her for her faults. Her follies are so natural, or so artful, that they become her; and those affectations which in another woman would be odious, serve but to make her more agreeable. I'll tell thee, Fainall, she once used me with that insolence, that in revenge I took her to pieces; sifted her, and separated her failings; I studied 'em and got 'em by rote. The catalogue was so large, that I was not without hopes, one day or other, to hate her heartily: to which end I so used myself to think of 'em, that at length, contrary to my design and expectation, they gave me ev'ry hour less disturbance; till in a few days it became habitual to me, to remember 'em without being displeased. They are now grown as familiar to me as my own frailties; and, in all probability in a little time longer I shall like 'em as well.

Fain. Marry her, marry her; be half as well acquainted with her charms, as you are with her defects, and my life on't you are your own man again.

Mira. Say you so?

Fain. I, I, I, have experience: I have a wife, and so forth.

A Messenger enters.

Mess. Is one 'Squire Witwould here?

Betty. Yes; what's your business?

Mess. I have a letter for him, from his brother, Sir Wilful, which I am charged to deliver into his own hands.

Betty. He's in the next room, friend—That way.

[*Exit Messenger.*

Mira. What, is the chief of that noble family in town, Sir Wilful Witwould?

Fain. He is expected to-day. Do you know him?

Mira. I have seen him, he promises to be an extraordinary person; I think you have the honour to be related to him.

Fain. Yes; he is half brother to this Witwould by a former wife, who was sister to my Lady Wishfort, my wife's mother. If you marry Millamant, you must call cousins too.

Mira. I would rather be his relation than his acquaintance.

Fain. He comes to town in order to equip himself for travel.

Mira. For travel! Why, the man that I mean is above forty.

Fain. No matter for that; 'tis for the honour of England, that all Europe should know we have blockheads of all ages.

Mira. I wonder there is not an act of parliament to save the credit of the nation, and prohibit the exportation of fools.

Fain. By no means, 'tis better as 'tis; 'tis better to trade with little loss, than to be quite eaten up with being overstock'd.

Mira. Pray, are the follies of this knight-errant and those of the 'squire his brother, any thing related?

Fain. Not at all; Witwould grows by the knight, like a medlar grafted on a crab. One will melt in your mouth, and t'other set your teeth on edge;—one is all pulp, and the other all core.

Mira. So one will be rotten before he be ripe; and the other will be rotten without ever being ripe at all.

Fain. Sir Wilful is an odd mixture of bashfulness and obstinacy. But when he's drunk, he's as loving as the monaster in the Tempest; and much after the same manner. To

give t'other his due, he has something of good-nature, and does not always want wit.

Mira. Not always : but as often as his memory fails him, and his common-place of comparisons. He is a fool with a good memory, and some few scraps of other folks' wit. He is one whose conversation can never be approved, yet it is now and then to be endured. He has indeed one good quality, he is not exception; for he so passionately affects the reputation of understanding raillery, that he will construe an affront into a jest ; and call downright rudeness and ill language, satire and fire.

Fain. If you have a mind to finish his picture, you have an opportunity to do it in full length. Behold the original.

WITWOULD enters.

Wit. Afford me your compassion, my dears : pity me, Fainall ; Mirabell, pity me.

Mira. I do from my soul.

Fain. Why, what's the matter ?

Wit. No letters for me, Betty ?

Betty. Did not a messenger bring you one but now, sir ?

Wit. Ay, but no other ?

Betty. No, sir.

Wit. That's hard, that's very hard ;—a messenger, a mule, a beast of burden ; he has brought me a letter from the fool, my brother, as heavy as a panegyric in a funeral sermon, or a copy of commendatory verses from one poet to another. And what's worse, 'tis as sure a forerunner of the author, as an epistle dedicatory.

Mira. A fool, and your brother, Witwould !

Wit. Ay, ay, my half brother. My half brother, he is no nearer, upon honour.

Mira. Then 'tis possible he may be but half a fool.

Wit. Good, good, Mirabell, *le Drole!* Good, good; hang him, don't let's talk of him:—Fainall, how does your lady? gad, I say any thing in the world to get this fellow out of my head. I beg pardon that I should ask a man of pleasure, and the town, a question at once so foreign and domestic. But I talk like an old maid at a marriage; I don't know what I say:—but she's the best woman in the world.

Fain. 'Tis well you don't know what you say, or else your commendation would go near to make me either vain or jealous.

Wit. No man in town lives well with a wife but Fainall. Your judgement, Mirabell?

Mira. You had better step and ask his wife, if you would be credibly informed.

Wit. Mirabell.

Mira. Ay.

Wit. My dear, I ask ten thousand pardons—gad, I have forgot what I was going to say to you.

Mira. I thank you heartily, heartily.

Wit. No, but pr'ythee excuse me—my memory is such a memory.

Mira. Have a care of such apologies, Witwould: for I never knew a fool but he affected to complain, either of the spleen, or his memory.

Fain. What have you done with Petulant?

Wit. He's reckoning his money—my money it was—I have had no luck to-day.

Fain. You may allow him to win of you at play; for you are sure to be too hard for him at repartee:—Since you monopolize the wit that is between you, the fortune must be his of course.

Mira. I don't find that Petulant confesses the superiority of wit to be your talent, Witwould.

Wit. Come, come, you are malicious now, and would breed debates—Petulant's my friend, and a very pretty fellow, and a very honest fellow, and has a smattering—faith and troth a pretty deal of an odd sort of a small wit: nay, I do him justice, I'm his friend, I won't wrong him—And if he had any judgment in the world, he would not be altogether contemptible. Come, come, don't detract from the merits of my friend.

Fain. You don't take your friend to be over-nicely bred.

Wit. No, no, hang him, the rogue has no manners at all, that I must own—No more breeding than a bum-bailiff, that I grant you—'T is a pity; the fellow has fire and life.

Mira. What, courage!

Wit. Hum, faith I don't know as to that—I can't say as to that.—Yes, faith, in controversy, he'll contradict any body.

Mira. Though 't were a man whom he feared, or a woman whom he loved.

Wit. Well, well, he does not always think before he speaks; we have all our failings: you are too hard upon him; you are, faith. Let me excuse him.—I can defend most of his faults, except one or two;—one he has, that's the truth on 't; if he were my brother I could not acquit him—that indeed I could wish were otherwise.

Mira. Ay marry, what's that, Witwould?

Wit. O, pardon me!—expose the infirmities of my friend!—No, my dear, excuse me there.

Fain. What, I warrant he's insincere, or 't is some such trifle.

Wit. No, no; what if he be? 't is no matter for that, his wit will excuse that: a wit should no more be sincere, than a woman constant; one argues a decay of parts, as 't other of beauty.

Mira. May be you think him too positive?

Wit. No, no, his being positive is an incentive to argument, and keeps up conversation.

Fain. Too illiterate.

Wit. That! that's his happiness---his want of learning gives him the more opportunity to shew his natural parts.

Mira. He wants words.

Wit. Ay; but I like him for that now; for his want of words gives me the pleasure very often to explain his meaning.

Fain. He's impudent.

Wit. No, that's not it.

Mira. Vain.

Wit. No.

Mira. What, he speaks unseasonable truths sometimes, because he has not wit enough to invent an evasion.

Wit. Truth! ha, ha, ha! No, no; since you will have it—I mean, he never speaks truth at all—that's all. He will lie like a chambermaid, or a woman of quality's porter. Now that is a fault.

A Coachman enters.

Coach. Is Master Petulant here, mistress?

Betty. Yes.

Coach. Three gentlewomen in a coach would speak with him.

Fain. O, brave Petulant! three!

Betty. I'll tell him.

Coach. You must bring two dishes of chocolate and a glass of cinnamon water. [Exeunt Coachman and Betty.]

Wit. That should be for two fasting *bono robes*, and a procurer troubled with wind. Now you may know what the three are.

Mira. You are very free with your friend's acquaintance.

Wit. Ay, ay, friendship without freedom is as dull as love without enjoyment, or wine without toasting ; but, to tell you a secret, these are trulls whom he allows coach-hire, and something more, by the week, to call on him once a day at public places.

Mira. How !

Wit. You shall see he won't go to 'em, because there's no more company here to take notice of him. Why, this is nothing to what he used to do : before he found out this way, I have known him to call for himself.

Fain. Call for himself ! what dost thou mean ?

Wit. Mean, why he would slip you out of this chocolate-house, just when you had been talking to him. As soon as your back was turn'd—whip he was gone ; then trip to his lodging, clap on a hood and scarf, and a mask, slap into a hackney-coach, and drive hither to the door again in a trice ; where he would send in for himself, that is, I mean, call for himself, wait for himself, nay, and what's more, not finding himself, sometimes leave a letter for himself.

Mira. I confess this is something extraordinary—I believe he waits for himself now, he is so long a coming ; O, I ask his pardon.

PETULANT and BETTY enter.

Betty. Sir, the coach stays.

Pet. Well, well, I come.—'Sbud, a man had as good be a profess'd midwife, as a profess'd gallant, at this rate ; to be knock'd up, and rais'd at all hours, and in all places ! Deuce on 'em, I won't come—D' ye hear, tell 'em I won't come—Let 'em snivel and cry their hearts out.

[*Exit* Betty.]

Fain. You are very cruel, Petulant.

Pet. All's one, let it pass—I have a humour to be cruel.

Mira. I hope they are not persons of condition that you use at this rate.

Pet. Condition ! condition's a dried fig, if I am not in humour—By this hand, if they were your—a—a—your what-d'ye-call-'ems themselves, they must wait or rub off, if I am not in the vein.

Mira. What-d'ye-call-'ems ! What are they, Witwould ?

Wit. Empresses, my dear—By your what-d'ye-call-'ems he means Sultana queens.

Pet. Ay, Roxalanas.

Mira. Cry you mercy.

Fain. Witwould says they are——

Pet. What does he say they are ?

Wit. I? fine ladies, I say.

Pet. Pass on, Witwould—Hark 'e, by this light his relations—Two co-heiresses his cousins, and an old aunt, who loves intriguing better than a conventicle.

Wit. Ha, ha, ha ! I had a mind to see how the rogue would come off—Ha, ha, ha ! 'gad I can't be angry with him, if he had said they were my mother and my sisters.

Mira. No !

Wit. No ; the rogue's wit and readiness of invention charm me, dear Petulant.

BETTY enters.

Betty. They are gone, sir, in great anger.

Pet. Enough, let 'em trundle. Anger helps complexion, saves paint.

Fain. This continence is all dissembled ; this is in order to have something to brag of the next time he makes court to Millamant, and swear he has abandoned the whole sex for her sake.

Mira. Have you not left off your impudent pretensions

there yet? I shall cut your throat, some time or other, Petulant, about that business.

Pet. Ay, ay, let that pass—There are other throats to be cut—

Mira. Meaning mine, sir?

Pet. Not I—I mean nobody—I know nothing—But there are uncles and nephews in the world—And they may be rivals—What then, all's one for that—

Mira. Now, hark' e, Petulant, come hither—Explain, or I shall call your interpreter.

Pet. Explain; I know nothing—Why you have an uncle, have you not, lately come to town, and lodges at my Lady Wishfort's?

Mira. True.

Pet. Why, that's enough—You and he are not friends: and if he should marry and have a child, you may be disinherited, ha!

Mira. Where hast thou stumbled upon all this truth?

Pet. All's one for that; why then, say I know something.

Mira. Come, thou art an honest fellow, Petulant, and shalt make love to my mistress, thou shalt, faith. What hast thou heard of my uncle?

Pet. I! nothing—I! If throats are to be cut, let swords clash; snug's the word, I shrug and am silent.

Mira. O, raillery, raillery. Come, I know thou art in the women's secrets—What, you're a cabalist; I know you staid at Millamant's last night, after I went. Was there any mention made of my uncle or me? tell me. If thou hast but good-nature equal to thy wit, Petulant, Tony Witwould, who is now thy competitor in fame, would shew as dim by thee as a dead whiting's eye by a pearl of orient; he would no more be seen by thee, than Mercury is by the sun. Come, I'm sure thou wo't tell me.

Pet. If I do, will you grant me common sense then, for the future?

Mira. Faith, I'll do what I can for thee, and I'll pray that it may be granted thee in the mean time.

Pet. Well, hark'e.

[They talk apart.]

Fain. Petulant and you both will find Mirabell as warm a rival as the lover.

Wit. 'Pshaw, 'pshaw! that she laughs at Petulant is plain. And for my part—But that it is almost a fashion to admire her, I should—Hark'e—To tell you a secret, but let it go no farther—Between friends, I shall never break my heart for her.

Fain. How!

Wit. She's handsome; but she's a sort of an uncertain woman.

Fain. I thought you had died for her.

Wit. Umph—No——

Fain. She has wit.

Wit. 'Tis what she will hardly allow any body else.—Now, I should hate that, if she were as handsome as Cleopatra. Mirabell is not so sure of her as he thinks for.

Fain. Why, do you think so?

Wit. We staid pretty late there last night; and heard something of an uncle to Mirabell, who is lately come to town—and is between him and the best part of his estate: Mirabell and he are at some distance, as my Lady Wishfort has been told; and you know she hates Mirabell worse than a quaker hates a parrot, or than a fishmonger hates a hard frost. Whether this uncle has seen Mrs. Millamant or not, I cannot say; but there were items of such a treaty being in embryo; and if it should come to life, poor Mirabell would be in some sort unfortunately fobbd, i'faith.

Fain. 'T is impossible Millamant should hearken to it.

Wit. Faith, my dear, I can't tell ; she's a woman, and a kind of an humourist.

Mira. And this is the sum of what you could collect last night ?

Pet. The quintessence. May be Witwould knows more, he staid longer—Besides, they never mind him ; they say any thing before him.

Mira. I thought you had been the greatest favourite.

Pet. Ay, tête à tête ; but not in public, because I make remarks.

Mira. You do ?

Pet. Ay, ay ; I'm malicious, man. Now he's soft, you know ; they are not in awe of him—The fellow's well bred ; he's what ye call a—What-d' ye-call 'em, a fine gentleman ; but he's silly withal.

Mira. I thank you ; I know as much as my curiosity requires. Fainall, are you for the Mall ?

Fain. Ay, I'll take a turn before dinner.

Wit. Ay, we'll all walk in the Park ; the ladies talk of being there.

Mira. I thought you were obliged to watch for your brother Sir Wilful's arrival.

Wit. No, no ; he comes to his aunt's, my Lady Wishfort : plague on him, I shall be troubled with him too ; what shall I do with the fool ?

Pet. Beg him for his estate, that I may beg you afterwards ; and so have but one trouble with you both.

Wit. O, rare Petulant ! thou art as quick as fire in a frosty morning : thou shalt to the Mall with us, and we'll be very severe.

Pet. Enough, I am in a humour to be severe.

Mira. Are you ? Pray then walk by yourselves—Let not us be accessory to your putting the ladies out of countenance

with your senseless ribaldry, which you roar out aloud as often as they pass by you; and when you have made a handsome woman blush, then you think you have been severe.

Pet. What, what? Then let 'em either shew their innocence by not understanding what they hear, or else shew their discretion by not hearing what they would not be thought to understand.

Mira. But hast not thou then sense enough to know that thou ought'st to be most ashamed thyself, when thou hast put another out of countenance?

Pet. Not I, by this hand—I always take blushing either for a sign of guilt or ill-breeding.

Mira. I confess you ought to think so. You are in the right, that you may plead the error of your judgment in defence of your practice.

Where modesty's ill-manners, 't is but fit

That impudence and malice pass for wit.

[Exeunt.]

ACT II. SCENE I.

St. James's Park. Mrs. FAINALL and Mrs. MARWOOD
enter.

Mrs. Fainall.

Ay, ay, dear Marwood, if we will be happy, we must find the means in ourselves, and among ourselves. Men are ever in extremes; either doating or averse. While they are lovers, if they have fire and sense, their jealousies are insupportable: and when they cease to love (we ought to think at least) they loathe: they look upon us with horror and

distaste ; they meet us like the ghosts of what we were, and as from such, fly from us.

Mrs. Mar. True, 't is an unhappy circumstance of life, that love should ever die before us ; and that the man so often should outlive the lover. But say what you will, 't is better to be left than never to have been loved. To pass our youth in dull indifference—to refuse the sweets of life because they once must leave us, is as preposterous, as to wish to have been born old, because we one day must be old. For my part, my youth may wear and waste, but it shall never rust in my possession.

Mrs. Fain. Then it seems you dissemble an aversion to mankind, only in compliance to my mother's honour.

Mrs. Mar. Certainly. To be free : I have no taste of those insipid dry discourses, with which our sex of force must entertain themselves apart from men. We may affect endearments to each other, profess eternal friendships, and seem to doat like lovers ; but 't is not in our natures long to persevere. Love will resume his empire in our breasts, and every heart, or soon or late, receive and re-admit him as its lawful tyrant.

Mrs. Fain. Bless me, how have I been deceived ? Why, you are a professed libertine.

Mrs. Mar. You see my friendship by my freedom. Come, be as sincere ; acknowledge that your sentiments agree with mine.

Mrs. Fain. Never.

Mrs. Mar. You hate mankind ?

Mrs. Fain. Heartily ; inveterately.

Mrs. Mar. Your husband ?

Mrs. Fain. Most transcendently ; ay, though I say it, meritoriously.

Mrs. Mar. Give me your hand upon 't.

Mrs. Fain. There.

Mrs. Mar. I join with you; what I have said has been to try you.

Mrs. Fain. Is it possible? Dost thou hate those vipers, men?

Mrs. Mar. I have done hating 'em, and am now come to despise them; the next thing I have to do, is eternally to forget them.

Mrs. Fain. There spoke the spirit of an Amazon, a Penthesilia.

Mrs. Mar. And yet I am thinking sometimes to carry my aversion farther.

Mrs. Fain. How?

Mrs. Mar. By marrying; if I could but find one that loved me very well, and would be thoroughly sensible of ill usage, I think I should do myself the violence of undergoing the ceremony.

Mrs. Fain. You would not dishonour him?

Mrs. Mar. No: but I'd make him believe I did, and that's as bad.

Mrs. Fain. Why had you not as good do it?

Mrs. Mar. O, if he should ever discover it, he would then know the worst, and be out of his pain; but I would have him ever to continue upon the rack of fear and jealousy.

Mrs. Fain. Ingenious mischief!—Would thou wert married to Mirabell!

Mrs. Mar. Would I were!

Mrs. Fain. You change colour.

Mrs. Mar. Because I hate him.

Mrs. Fain. So do I; but I can hear him named.—But what reason have you to hate him in particular?

Mrs. Mar. I never loved him; he is, and always was insufferably proud.

Mrs. Fain. By the reason you give for your aversion one would think it dissembled ; for you have laid a fault to his charge of which his enemies must acquit him.

Mrs. Mar. O, then it seems you are one of his favourable enemies. Methinks you look a little pale, and now you flush again.

Mrs. Fain. Do I ? I think I am a little sick o' the sudden.

Mrs. Mar. What ails you ?

Mrs. Fain. My husband. Do n't you see him ? He turned short upon me unawares, and has almost overcome me.

FAINALL and MIRABELL enter.

Mrs. Mar. Ha, ha, ha ! he comes opportunely for you.

Mrs. Fain. For you, for he has brought Mirabell with him.

Fain. My dear.

Mrs. Fain. My soul.

Fain. You do n't look well to day, child.

Mrs. Fain. D 'ye think so ?

Mira. He 's the only man that does, madam.

Mrs. Fain. The only man that would tell me so at least ; and the only man from whom I could hear it without mortification.

Fain. O, my dear, I am satisfied of your tenderness ; I know you cannot resent any thing from me ; especially what is an effect of my concern.

Mrs. Fain. Mr. Mirabell, my mother interrupted you in a pleasant relation last night ; I could fain hear it out.

Mira. The persons concerned in that affair, have yet a tolerable reputation.—I am afraid Mr. Fainall will be censorious.

Mrs. Fain. He has a humour more prevailing than his curiosity, and will willingly dispense with the hearing of one

scandalous story, to avoid giving an occasion to make another, by being seen to walk with his wife. This way, Mr. Mirabell, and I dare promise you will oblige us both.

[*Exeunt Mrs. Fainall and Mirabell.*

Fain. Excellent creature!—Well, sure if I should live to be rid of my wife, I should be a miserable man.

Mrs. Mar. Ay?

Fain. For having only that one hope, the accomplishment of it, of consequence, must put an end to all my hopes; and what a wretch is he who must survive his hopes! nothing remains when that day comes, but to sit down and weep like Alexander, when he wanted other worlds to conquer.

Mrs. Mar. Will you not follow 'em?

Fain. No! I think not.

Mrs. Mar. Pray let us; I have a reason.

Fain. You are not jealous?

Mrs. Mar. Of whom?

Fain. Of Mirabell.

Mrs. Mar. If I am, is it inconsistent with my love to you, that I am tender of your honour.

Fain. You would intimate then, as if there were a particular understanding between my wife and him?

Mrs. Mar. I think she does not hate him to that degree she would be thought.

Fain. But he, I fear, is too insensible.

Mrs. Mar. It may be that you are deceived.

Fain. It may be so. I do not now begin to apprehend it.

Mrs. Mar. What?

Fain. That I have been deceived, madam, and you are false.

Mrs. Mar. That I am false! What mean you?

Fain. To let you know I see through all your little arts — Come, you both love him; and both have equally dis-

sembled your aversion. Your mutual jealousies of one another, have made you clash till you have both struck fire. I have seen the warm confession, reddening on your cheeks, and sparkling from your eyes.

Mrs. Mar. You do me wrong.

Fain. I do not——'T was for my ease to oversee and wilfully neglect the gross advances made him by my wife; that by permitting her to be engaged, I might continue unsuspected in my pleasures; and take you oftener to my arms in full security. But could you think, because the nodding husband would not wake, that e'er the watchful lover slept?

Mrs. Mar. And wherewithal can you reproach me?

Fain. With infidelity, with loving another, with love of Mirabell.

Mrs. Mar. 'T is false. I challenge you to shew an instance that can confirm your groundless accusation. I hate him.

Fain. And wherefore do you hate him? He is insensible, and your resentment follows his neglect. An instance! The injuries you have done him are a proof: your interposing in his love. What cause had you to make discoveries of his pretended passion? to undeceive the credulous aunt, and be the officious obstacle of his match with Millamant?

Mrs. Mar. My obligations to my lady urged me: I had professed a friendship to her, and could not see her easy nature so abused by that dissembler.

Fain. What, was it conscience then?—Profess'd a friendship!—O, the pious friendships of the female sex!

Mrs. Mar. More tender, more sincere, and more enduring, than all the vain and empty vows of men, whether professing love to us, or mutual faith to one another.

Fain. Ha, ha, ha! you are my wife's friend too.

Mrs. Mar. Shame and ingratitude! Do you reproach me? You, you upbraid me! Have I been false to her through

strict fidelity to you, and sacrificed my friendship to keep my love inviolate ? and have you the baseness to charge me with the guilt, unmindful of the merit ? To you it should be meritorious, that I have been vicious ; and do you reflect that guilt upon me, which should lie buried in your bosom ?

Fain. You misinterpret my reproof. I meant but to remind you of the slight account you once could make of strictest ties, when set in competition with your love to me.

Mrs. Mar. 'Tis false, you urged it with deliberate malice—'Twas spoke in scorn, and I never will forgive it.

Fain. Your guilt, not your resentment begets your rage. If yet you loved, you could forgive a jealousy ; but you are stung to find you are discovered.

Mrs. Mar. It shall be all discovered. You too shall be discovered ; be sure you shall. I can but be exposed—if I do it myself, I shall prevent your baseness.

Fain. Why, what will you do ?

Mrs. Mar. Disclose it to your wife ; own what has past between us.

Fain. Frenzy !

Mrs. Mar. By all my wrongs I'll do't—I'll publish to the world the injuries you have done me, both in my fame and fortune : with both I trusted you, you bankrupt in honour, as indigent of wealth !

Fain. Your fame I have preserved. Your fortune has been bestowed as the prodigality of your love would have it, in pleasures which we both have shared. Yet, had not you been false, I had ere this repaid it—'Tis true—had you permitted Mirabell with Millamant to have stolen their marriage, my lady had been incensed beyond all means of reconciliation ; Millamant had forfeited the moiety of her fortune, which then would have descended to my wife—And

wherefore did I marry, but to make lawful prize of a rich widow's wealth, and squander it on love and you?

Mrs. Mar. Deceit and frivolous pretence!

Fain. Death, am I not married? what's pretence? Am I not imprisoned, fetter'd? have I not a wife? nay, a wife that was a widow, a young widow, a handsome widow; and would be again a widow, but that I have a heart of proof, and something of a constitution to bustle through the ways of wedlock and this world? Will you be reconciled to truth and me?

Mrs. Mar. Impossible. Truth and you are inconsistent ——I hate you, and shall for ever.

Fain. For loving you?

Mrs. Mar. I loath the name of love after such usage; and next to the guilt with which you would asperse me, I scorn you most. Farewell.

Fain. Nay, we must not part thus.

Mrs. Mar. Let me go.

Fain. Come, I'm sorry.

Mrs. Mar. I care not——Let me go.——Break my hands, do——I'd leave 'em to get loose.

Fain. I would not hurt you for the world. Have I no other hold to keep you here?

Mrs. Mar. Well, I have deserved it all.

Fain. You know I love you.

Mrs. Mar. Poor dissembling! O that——Well, it is not yet——

Fain. What? what is it not? what is it not yet? is it not yet too late——

Mrs. Mar. No, it is not yet too late——I have that comfort.

Fain. It is, to love another.

Mrs. Mar. But not to loath, detest, abhor mankind, myself, and the whole treacherous world.

Fain. Nay, this is extravagance—Come, I ask your pardon—No tears—I was to blame—I could not love you and be easy in my doubts—Pray, forbear—I believe you; I'm convinced I've done you wrong; and any way, every way will make amends;—I'll hate my wife yet more; damn her, I'll part with her, rob her of all she's worth, and we'll retire somewhere, any where, to another world; I'll marry thee—Be pacified—'Sdeath! they come, hide your face, your tears—You have a mask, wear it a moment. This way, this way, be persuaded. [Exeunt.

MIRABELL and Mrs. FAINALL enter.

Mrs. Fain. They are here yet.

Mira. They are turning into the other walk.

Mrs. Fain. While I only hated my husband, I could bear to see him; but since I have despised him, he's too offensive.

Mira. O you should hate with prudence.

Mrs. Fain. Yes, for I have loved with indiscretion.

Mira. You should have just so much disgust for your husband, as may be sufficient to make you relish your lover.

Mrs. Fain. You have been the cause that I have loved without bounds; and would you set limits to that aversion, of which you have been the occasion? Why did you make me marry this man?

Mira. Why do we daily commit disagreeable and dangerous actions? To save that idol reputation. If the familiarities of our loves had produced that consequence, of which you were apprehensive, where could you have fixed a father's name with credit, but on a husband? I knew Fainall to be a man lavish of his morals, an interested and professing friend, a false and a designing lover; yet one whose wit and outward fair behaviour have gained a reputation with the town, enough to make that woman stand excused, who

has suffered herself to be won by his addresses. A better man ought not to have been sacrificed to the occasion; a worse had not answered to the purpose. When you are weary of him, you know your remedy.

Mrs. Fain. I ought to stand in some degree of credit with you, Mirabell.

Mira. In justice to you, I have made you privy to my whole design, and put it in your power to ruin or advance my fortune.

Mrs. Fain. Whom have you instructed to represent your pretended uncle?

Mira. Waitwell, my servant.

Mrs. Fain. He is an humble servant to Foible, my mother's woman, and may win her to your interest.

Mira. Care is taken for that—"she is won and worn by "this time." They were married this morning.

Mrs. Fain. Who?

Mira. Waitwell and Foible. I would not tempt my servant to betray me, by trusting him too far. If your mother, in hopes to ruin me, should consent to marry my pretended uncle, he might, like Mosca in the Fox, stand upon terms; so I made him sure before-hand.

Mrs. Fain. So, if my poor mother is caught in a contract, you will discover the imposture betimes; and release her, by producing a certificate of her gallant's former marriage.

Mira. Yes, upon condition that she consent to my marriage with her niece, and surrender the moiety of her fortune in her possesion.

Mrs. Fain. She talked last night of endeavouring at a match between Millamant and your uncle.

Mira. That was by Foible's direction, and my instruction, that she might seem to carry it more privately.

Mrs. Fain. Well, I have an opinion of your success: for

I believe my lady will do any thing to get a husband ; and when she has this, which you have provided for her, I suppose she will submit to any thing to get rid of him.

Mira. Yes, I think the good lady would marry any thing that resembled a man, though 'twere no more than what a butler could pinch out of a napkin.

Mrs. Fain. Female frailty ! we must all come to it, if we live to be old, and feel the craving of a false appetite, when the true is decayed.

Mira. An old woman's appetite is depraved like that of a girl—'tis the green-sickness of a second childhood ; and like the faint offer of a latter spring, serves but to usher in the fall ; and withers in an affected bloom.

Mrs. Fain. Here 's your mistress.

Mrs. Millamant, Witwould, and Mincing enter.

Mira. Here she comes i'faith full sail, with her fan spread and streamers out, and a shoal of fools for tenders—ha, no ; I cry her mercy.

Mrs. Fain. I see but one poor empty sculler ; and he tows her woman after him.

Mira. You seem to be unattended, madam.—You used to have the *beau monde* throng after you, and a flock of gay fine perukes hovering round you.

Wit. Like moths about a candle—I had like to have lost my comparison for want of breath.

Mill. O, I have denied myself airs to-day. I have walked as fast through the crowd—

Wit. As a favourite just disgraced ; and with as few followers.

Mill. Dear Mr. Witwould, truce with your similitudes : for I am as sick of 'em—

Wit. As a physician of a good air—I cannot help it, madam, though 'tis against myself.

Mill. Yet again ! Mincing, stand between me and his wit.

Wit. Do, Mrs. Mincing, like a screen before a great fire. I confess I do blaze to-day, I am too bright.

Mrs. Fain. But, dear Millamant, why were you so long ?

Mill. Long ! lud ! have I not made violent haste ? I have asked every living thing I met for you ; I have enquired after you, as after a new fashion.

Wit. Madam, truce with your similitudes—no, you met her husband, and did not ask him for her.

Mira. By your leave, Witwoald, that were like enquiring after an old fashion, to ask a husband for his wife.

Wit. Hum, a hit, a hit, a palpable hit, I confess it.

Minc. You were dressed before I came abroad.

Mill. Ay, that's true—O but then I had—Mincing, what had I ? why was I so long ?

Minc. O, mem, your laship staid to peruse a pacquet of letters.

Mill. O ay, letters—I had letters—I am persecuted with letters—I hate letters—nobody knows how to write letters ; and yet one has 'em, one does not know why—they serve one to pin up one's hair.

Wit. Is that the way ? Pray, madam, do you pin up your hair with all your letters ? I find I must keep copies.

Mill. Only with those in verse, Mr. Witwould. I never pin up my hair with prose. I think, I tried once, Mincing.

Minc. O, mem, I shall never forget it.

Mill. Ay, poor Mincing tift and tift all the morning.

Minc. Till I had the cramp in my fingers, I'll vow, mem, and all to no purpose. But when your laship pins it up with poetry, it sits so pleasant the next day as any thing, and is so pure, and so crips.

Wit. Indeed, so crips ?

Minc. You're such a critic, Mr. Witwould.

Mill. Mirabell, did you take exceptions last night? O ay, and went away—Now I think on't, I'm angry—No, now I think on't I'm pleased—For I believe I gave you some pain.

Mira. Does that please you?

Mill. Infinitely; I love to give pain.

Mira. You would affect a cruelty which is not in your nature; your true vanity is in the power of pleasing.

Mill. O, I ask your pardon for that—One's cruelty is one's power, and when one parts with one's cruelty one parts with one's power; and when one has parted with that, I fancy one's old and ugly.

Mira. Ay, ay, suffer your cruelty to ruin the object of your power, to destroy your lover—And then how vain, how lost a thing you'll be! Nay, 'tis true: you are no longer handsome, when you have lost your lover; your beauty dies upon the instant: for beauty is the lover's gift; 'tis he bestows your charms—Your glass is all a cheat. The ugly and the old, whom the looking-glass mortifies, yet, after commendation, can be flattered by it, and discover beauties in it; for that reflects our praises, rather than our faces.

Mill. O the vanity of these men! Fainall, d'ye hear him? If they did not commend us we were not handsome! Now you must know they could not commend one, if one was not handsome. Beauty is the lover's gift!—Dear me, what is a lover that it can give? Why, one makes lovers as fast as one pleases, and they live as long as one pleases, and they die as soon as one pleases; and then if one pleases, one makes more.

Wit. Very pretty. Why, you make no more of making of lovers, madam, than of making so many card-matches.

Mill. One no more owes one's beauty to a lover, than

one's wit to an echo : they can but reflect what we look and say ; vain, empty things if we are silent or unseen, and want a being.

Mira. Yet, to those two vain empty things, you owe two of the greatest pleasures of your life.

Mill. How so ?

Mira. To your lover you owe the pleasure of hearing yourselves praised ; and to an echo the pleasure of hearing yourselves talk.

Wit. But I know a lady that loves talking so incessantly, she won't give an echo fair play ; she has that everlasting rotation of tongue, that an echo must wait till she dies, before it can catch her last words.

Mill. O, fiction ! Fainall, let us leave these men.

Mira. Draw off Witwould. [Aside to Mrs. Fainall.

Mrs. Fain. Immediately : I have a word or two for Mr. Witwould. [Exeunt Mrs. Fainall and Witwould.

Mira. I would beg a little private audience too—You had the tyranny to deny me last night ; though you knew I came to impart a secret to you that concerned my love.

Mill. You saw I was engaged.

Mira. Unkind. You had the leisure to entertain a herd of fools ; things who visit you from their excessive idleness ; bestowing on your easiness that time, which is the incumbrance of their lives. How can you find delight in such society ? It is impossible they should admire you,—they are not capable ; or if they were, it should be to you as a mortification ; for sure to please a fool is some degree of folly.

Mill. I please myself—Besides, sometimes to converse with fools, is for my health.

Mira. Your health ! Is there a worse disease than the conversation of fools ?

Mill. Yes, the vapours ; fools are physic for it, next to assa-fœtida.

Mira. You are not in a course of fools?

Mill. Mirabell, if you persist in this offensive freedom—you'll displease me—I think I must resolve, after all, not to have you—We sha'n't agree.

Mira. Not in our physic, it may be.

Mill. And yet our distemper, in all likelihood, will be the same: for we shall be sick of one another. I sha'n't endure to be reprimanded, nor instructed; 'tis so dull to act always by advice, and so tedious to be told of one's faults—I can't bear it. Well, I won't have you, Mirabell—I'm resolved—I think—You may go—Ha, ha, ha! What would you give that you could help loving me?

Mira. I would give something that you did not know I could not help it.

Mill. Come, don't look grave then. Well, what do you say to me?

Mira. I say that a man may as soon make a friend by his wit, or a fortune by his honesty, as win a woman with plain-dealing and sincerity.

Mill. Sententious Mirabell! Pr'ythee, don't look with that violent and inflexible wise face, like Solomon at the dividing of the child, in an old tapestry hanging.

Mira. You are merry, madam; but I would persuade you for a moment to be serious.

Mill. What, with that face? No, if you keep your countenance, 'tis impossible I should hold mine. Well, after all, there is something very moving in a love-sick face. Ha, ha, ha! Well, I won't laugh, don't be peevish—Heigho! Now I'll be melancholy, as melancholy as a watch-light. Well, Mirabell, if ever you will win me, woo me now—Nay, if you are so tedious, fare you well: I see they are walking away.

Mira. Can you not find in the variety of your disposition one moment—

Mill. To hear you tell me Foible's married, and your plot like to speed—No.

Mira. But how you came to know it—

Mill. Without the help of conjuration, you can't imagine; unless she should tell me herself. Which of the two it may have been, I will leave you to consider; and when you have done thinking of that, think of me.

[*Exeunt Millamant and Mincing.*

Mira. I have something more—Gone—Think of you! to think of a whirlwind, though 'twere in a whirlwind, were a case of more steady contemplation,—a very tranquillity of mind and mansion. A fellow that lives in a windmill, has not a more whimsical dwelling, than the heart of a man that is lodged in a woman. There is no point of the compass to which they cannot turn, and by which they are not turned; and by one as well as another: for motion, not method, is their occupation. To know this, and yet continue to be in love, is to be made wise from the dictates of reason, and yet persevere to play the fool by the force of instinct—O, here comes my pair of turtles—What, billing so sweetly? Is not Valentine's day over with you yet?

[*Waitwell and Foible enter.*

Sirrah, Waitwell, why sure you think you were married for your own recreation, and not for my conveniency.

Wait. Your pardon, sir. With submission, we have indeed been billing; but still with an eye to business, sir, I have instructed her as well as I could. If she can take your directions as readily as my instructions, sir, your affairs are in a prosperous way.

Mira. Give you joy, Mrs. Foible.

Foil. O ! las, sir, I'm so ashamed—I'm afraid my lady has been in a thousand inquietudes for me. But I protest, sir, I made as much haste as I could.

Wait. That she did indeed, sir. "It was my fault that "she did not make more."

"*Mira.* That I believe."

Foil. I told my lady, as you instructed me, sir, that I had a prospect of seeing Sir Rowland, your uncle ; and that I would put her ladyship's picture in my pocket to shew him ; which I'll be sure to say has made him so enamour'd of her beauty, that he burns with impatience to lie at her ladyship's feet, and worship the original.

Mira. Excellent Foible ! Matrimony has made you eloquent in love.

Wait. I think she has profited, sir ; I think so.

Foil. You have seen Madam Millamant, sir ?

Mira. Yes.

Foil. I told her, sir, because I did not know that you might find an opportunity ; she had so much company last night.

Mira. Your diligence will merit more—in the mean time— [Gives money.]

Foil. O, dear sir, your humble servant.

Wait. Spouse.

Mira. Stand off, sir, not a penny—Go on and prosper, Foible—The lease shall be made good, and the farm stock'd, if we succeed.

Foil. I don't question your generosity, sir : and you need not doubt of success. If you have no more commands, sir, I'll be gone ; I'm sure my lady is at her toilet, and can't dress till I come. O dear, I'm sure that [Looking out.] was Mrs. Marwood that went by in a mask ; if she has seen me with you, I'm sure she'll tell my lady. I'll make haste

home, and prevent her. Your servant, sir. B'w'ye, Waitwell.

[Exit.]

Wait. Sir Rowland, if you please. The jade's so pert upon her preferment, she forgets herself.

Mira. Come, sir, will you endeavour to forget yourself—and transform into Sir Rowland?

Wait. Why, sir, it will be impossible I should remember myself—[Exit Mirabell.] Married, knighted, and attended, all in one day! 't is enough to make any man forget himself. The difficulty will be how to recover my acquaintance and familiarity with my former self; and fall from my transformation to a reformation into Waitwell. Nay, I sha'n't be quite the same Waitwell neither—for now I remember I'm married, and can't be my own again.

*Ay, there's my grief; that's the sad change of life;
To loose my title, and yet keep my wife.*

[Exit.]

ACT III. SCENE I.

A Room in Lady Wishfort's House. Lady WISHFORT at her Toilet, PEG awaiting.

Lady Wishfort.

MERCIFUL, no news of Foible yet?

Peg. No, madam.

L. Wish. I have no more patience—if I have not fretted myself till I am pale again, there's no veracity in me. Fetch me the red—the red, do you hear, sweet-heart? an arrant ash-colour, as I am a person. Look ye how this wench stirs! why dost thou not fetch me a little red? didst thou not hear me, mopus?

Peg. The red ratisia, does your ladyship mean, or the cherry-brandy?

L. Wish. Ratafia, fool! no, fool, not the ratafia, fool—Grant me patience! I mean the Spanish paper, ideot; complexion.—Darling paint, paint, paint;—dost thou understand that, changeling, dangling thy hands like bobbins before thee? why dost thou not stir, puppet? thou wooden thing upon wires!

Peg. Lord, madam, your ladyship is so impatient—I cannot come at the paint, madam; Mrs. Foible has lock'd it up, and carried the key with her.

L. Wish. Plague take you both.—Fetch me the cherry-brandy then. [Exit Peg.] I'm as pale and as faint, I look like Mrs. Qualmsick, the curate's wife, that's always breeding—Wench, come, come, wench, what art thou doing? sipping? tasting? save thee, dost thou not know the bottle?

PEG enters with a Bottle and a China Cup.

Peg. Madam, I was looking for a cup.

L. Wish. A cup, save thee; and what a cup hast thou brought! dost thou take me for a Fairy, to drink out of an acorn? why didst thou not bring thy thimble? hast thou ne'er a brass thimble clinking in thy pocket with a bit of nutmeg? I warrant thee. Come, fill, fill—So—again. See who that is—[One knocks.] Set down the bottle first.—Here, here, under the table—What, would'st thou go with the bottle in thy hand, like a tapster? [Exit Peg.] As I'm a person, this wench has lived in an inn upon the road, before she came to me, “like Mariternes the Asturian in “Don Quixote.”

PEG enters.

No Foible yet?

Peg. No, madam, Mrs. Marwood.

L. Wish. O! Marwood; let her come in. Come in, good Marwood.

Mrs. MARWOOD enters.

Mrs. Mar. I am surprised to find your ladyship in *disbâille* at this time of day.

L. Wish. Foible's a lost thing; has been abroad since morning, and never heard of since.

Mrs. Mar. I saw her but now, as I came mask'd through the park, in conference with Mirabell.

L. Wish. With Mirabell? you call my blood into my face, with mentioning that traitor. She durst not have the confidence. I sent her to negotiate an affair, in which, if I'm detected, I'm undone. If that wheedling villain has wrought upon Foible to detect me, I'm ruin'd. Oh, my dear friend, I'm a wretch of wretches if I'm detected.

Mrs. Mar. O, madam, you cannot suspect Mrs. Foible's integrity.

L. Wish. O, he carries poison in his tongue that would corrupt integrity itself. If she has given him an opportunity, she has as good as put her integrity into his hands. Ah! dear Marwood, what's integrity to an opportunity?—Hark! I hear her—Dear, friend, retire into my closet, that I may examine her with more freedom—You'll pardon me, dear friend, I can make bold with you—There are books over the chimney—Quarles and Pryn, and the Short View of the Stage, with Bunyan's works, to entertain you—

[Exit Mrs. Marwood.

Go, you thing, and send her in.

[Exit Peg.

FOIBLE enters.

L. Wish. O, Foible, where hast thou been? what hast thou been doing?

Foi. Madam, I have seen the party.

L. Wish. But what hast thou done?

Foi. Nay, 'tis your ladyship has done, "and are to do;" I have only promised. But a man so enamour'd—so transported! well, if worshipping of pictures be a sin—poor Sir Rowland, I say.

L. Wish. The miniature has been counted like—But hast thou not betray'd me, Foible? hast thou not detected me to that faithless Mirabell? What hadst thou to do with him in the park? answer me, has he got nothing out of thee?

Foi. So mischief has been before-hand with me—what shall I say? [Aside.] Alas, madam, could I help it, if I met that confident thing? was I in fault? If you had heard how he used me, and all upon your ladyship's account, I'm sure you would not suspect my fidelity. Nay, if that had been the worst, I could have borne; but he had a fling at your ladyship too, and then I could not hold; but, i'faith, I gave him his own.

L. Wish. Me! what did the filthy fellow say?

Foi. O, madam; 'tis a shame to say what he said—with his taunts and his fleers, tossing up his nose. Humph, says he, 'what you are a hatching some plot,' says he, 'you are so early abroad, or catering,' says he, 'ferreting for some disbanded officer, I warrant—Half-pay is but thin subsistence,' says he, 'Well, what pension does your lady propose? Let me see:' says he, 'what, she must come down pretty deep now, she's superannuated,' says he, 'and—'

L. W. Odds my life, I'll have him—I'll have him murdered. I'll have him poison'd. Where does he eat? I'll marry a drawer to have him poison'd in his wine, "I'll send for Robin from Locket's immediately."

Foi. Poison him! poisoning's too good for him.—Starve

him, madam, starve him; marry Sir Rowland, and get him disinherited. O, you would bless yourself to hear what he said.

L. *Wish.* A villain! superannuated!

Foi. ‘Humph,’ says he, ‘I hear you are laying designs against me too,’ says he, ‘and Mrs. Millamant is to marry my uncle.’ He does not suspect a word of your ladyship; but,’ says he, ‘I’ll fit you for that, I warrant you,’ says he, ‘I’ll hamper you for that,’ says he, ‘you and your old frippery too,’ says he, I’ll handle you—

L. *Wish.* Audacious villain! handle me! would he durst! —Frippery! old frippery! Was there ever such a foul-mouth’d fellow? I’ll be married to-morrow; I’ll be contracted to-night.

Foi. The sooner the better, madam.

L. *Wish.* Will Sir Rowland be here, say’st thou? when, Foible?

Foi. Incontinently, madam. No new sheriff’s wife expects the return of her husband after knighthood, with that impatience in which Sir Rowland burns for the dear hour of kissing your ladyship’s hand after dinner.

L. *Wish.* Frippery! superannuated frippery! I’ll frippery the villain; I’ll reduce him to frippery and rags. A tatterdemallion—I hope to see him hung with tatters, like a Long-lane pent-house, or a gibbet thief. A slander-mouth’d railler—I warrant the spendthrift prodigal is in debt as much as the million lottery, or the whole court upon a birth-day. I’ll spoil his credit with his taylor. Yes, he shall have my niece with her fortune, he shall.

Foi. He! I hope to see him lodge in Ludgate first, and angle into Blackfriars for brass farthings, with an old mitten.

L. *Wish.* Ay, dear Foible; thank thee for that, dear Foi.

ble. He has put me out of all patience. I shall never recompose my features, to receive Sir Rowland with any economy of face. The wretch has fretted me, that I am absolutely decayed. Look, Foible.

Foi. Your ladyship has frown'd a little too rashly, indeed, madam. There are some cracks discernible in the white varnish.

L. Wish. Let me see the glass—Cracks, say'st thou? why I am arrantly flay'd—I look like an old peel'd wall. Thou must repair me, Foible, before Sir Rowland comes, or I shall never keep up to my picture.

Foi. I warrant you, madam; a little art once made your picture like you; and now a little of the same art must make you like your picture. Your picture must sit for you, madam.

L. Wish. But art thou sure Sir Rowland will not fail to come? or will he not fail when he does come? will he be importunate, Foible, “and push?” for if he should not be importunate—I shall never break decorums—I shall die with confusion, if I am forced to advance—Oh no, I can never advance—I shall swoon if he should expect advances. No, I hope Sir Rowland is better bred, than to put a lady to the necessity of breaking her forms. I won't be too coy, neither.—I won't give him despair—But a little disdain is not amiss; a little scorn is alluring.

Foi. A little scorn becomes your ladyship.

L. Wish. Yes; but tenderness becomes me best—“A sort of a dyingness.” You see that picture has a—sort of a—Ha, Foible! a swimmingness in the eyes—Yes, I'll look so.—My niece affects it; but she wants features. Is Sir Rowland handsome? let my toilet be removed—I'll dress above. I'll receive Sir Rowland here. Is he handsome? don't answer me. I won't know: I'll be surprised; I'll be taken by surprise.

Foi. By storm, madam; Sir Rowland's a brisk man.

L. Wish. Is he? O then he'll importune, if he's a brisk man. "I shall save decorum if Sir Rowland importunes." "I have a mortal terror at the apprehension of offending against decorums. O, I'm glad he is a brisk man." Let my things be removed, good Foible.

[*Exit.*]

Mrs. FAINALL enters.

Mrs. *Fain*. O, Foible, I have been in a fright, lest I should come too late. That devil, Marwood, saw you in the park with Mirabell, and I'm afraid will discover it to my lady.

Foi. Discover what, madam?

Mrs. *Fain*. Nay, nay, put not on that strange face. I am privy to the whole design, and know that Waitwell, to whom thou wert this morning married, is to personate Mirabell's uncle, and as such, winning my lady, to involve her in those difficulties from which Mirabell only must release her, by his making his conditions to have my cousin and her fortune left to her own disposal.

Foi. O, dear madam, I beg your pardon. It was not my confidence in your ladyship that was deficient; but I thought the former good correspondence between your ladyship and Mr. Mirabell might have hindered his communicating this secret.

Mrs. *Fain*. Dear Foible, forget that.

Foi. O, dear Madam, Mr. Mirabell is such a sweet winning gentleman—But your ladyship is the pattern of generosity.—Sweet lady, to be so good! Mr. Mirabell cannot choose but be grateful. I find your ladyship has his heart still. Now, madam, I can safely tell your ladyship our success. Mrs. Marwood had told my lady; but I warrant I managed myself. I turned it all for the better. I told my

lady that Mr. Mirabell railed at her. I laid horrid things to his charge, I'll vow ; and my lady is so incensed, that she'll be contracted to Sir Rowland to-night, she says ;—I warrant I worked her up, that he may have her for asking for, as they say of a Welch maidenhead.

Mrs. Fain. O, rare Foible !

Foi. Madam, I beg your ladyship to acquaint Mr. Mirabell of his success. I would be seen as little as possible to speak to him—besides, I believe Madam Marwood watches me—She has a penchant ; but I know Mr. Mirabell can't abide her.—[*Calls.*] John—remove my lady's toilet. Madam, your servant.—My lady is so impatient, I fear she'll come for me, if I stay.

Mrs. Fain. I'll go with you up the back-stairs, lest I should meet her.

[*Exeunt.*]

Mrs. MARWOOD enters.

Mrs. Mar. Indeed, Mrs. Engine, is it thus with you ? Are you become a go-between of this importance ? Yes, I shall watch you. Why, this wench is the *pas-partout*, a very master-key to every body's strong box. My friend Fainall, have you carried it so swimmingly ? I thought there was something in it ; but it seems 't is over with you. Your loathing is not from a want of appetite then, but from a surfeit : else you could never be so cool, to fall from a principal to be an assistant : to procure for him ! a pattern of generosity, that I confess. Well, Mr. Fainall, you have met with your match. O, man ! man !—Woman ! woman ! The devil's an ass : if I were a painter, I would draw him like an ideot, a driveller with a bib and bells. Man should have his head and horns, and woman the rest of him. Poor simple fiend ! Madam Marwood has a penchant, but he can't abide her.—'Twere better for him you had not been his confessor in that affair ; without you could have kept his coun-

sel closer. I shall not prove another pattern of generosity—he has not obliged me to that with those excesses of himself; and now I'll have none of him. Here comes the good lady, panting ripe; with a heart full of hope, and a head full of care, like any chemist upon the day of projection.

Lady WISHFORT enters.

L. *Wishb.* O, dear Marwood, what shall I say for this rude forgetfulness?—But my dear friend is all goodness.

Mrs. *Mar.* No apologies, dear madam, I have been very well entertained.

L. *Wishb.* As I'm a person I am in a very chaos to think I should so forget myself—But I have such an olio of affairs, really I know not what to do—[*Calls.*] Foible—I expect my nephew Sir Wilful every moment too:—Why, Foible—he means to travel for improvement.

Mrs. *Mar.* Methinks Sir Wilful should rather think of marrying than travelling at his years. I hear he is turned of forty.

L. *Wishb.* O, he's in less danger of being spoiled by his travels—I am against my nephew's marrying too young. It will be time enough when he comes back; and has acquired discretion to choose for himself.

Mrs. *Mar.* Methinks Mrs. Millamant and he would make a very fit match. He may travel afterwards—'T is a thing very usual with young gentlemen.

L. *Wishb.* I promise you I have thought on 't—and since 'tis your judgment, I'll think on 't again. I assure you I will; I value your judgment extremely. On my word I'll propose it,

FOIBLE enters.

Come, come, Foible—I had forgot my nephew will be here before dinner—I must make haste.

Foi. Mr. Witwould and Mr. Petulant are come to dine with your ladyship.

L. Wish. O dear, I can't appear till I am dress'd.—Dear Marwood, shall I be free with you again, and beg you to entertain 'em? I'll make all imaginable haste. Dear friend, excuse me.

[*Exeunt Lady Wishfort and Foible.*]

Mrs. MILLAMANT and MINCING enter.

Mill. Sure never any thing was so unbred as that odious man.—Marwood, your servant.

Mrs. Mar. You have a colour; what's the matter?

Mill. That horrid fellow Petulant, has provok'd me into a flame—I have broke my fan—Mincing, lend me yours.—Is not all the powder out of my hair?

Mrs. Mar. No, What has he done?

Mill. Nay, he has done nothing; he has only talk'd—Nay, he has said nothing neither; but he has contradicted every thing that has been said. For my part, I thought Witwould and he would have quarrell'd.

Minc. I vow, mem, I thought once they would have fit.

Mill. Well, 'tis a lamentable thing, I swear, that one has not the liberty of choosing one's acquaintance as one does one's clothes.

Mrs. Mar. If we had that liberty, we should be as weary of one set of acquaintance, though never so good, as we are of one suit, though never so fine.—A fool and a *Doily* stuff would now and then find days of grace, and be worn for variety.

Mill. I could consent to wear 'em, if they would wear alike; but fools never wear out—They are such *drap-de-berry* things! without one could give 'em to one's chamber-maid after a day or two.

Mrs. Mar. 'Twere better so indeed. Or what think you of the play-house? A fine, gay, glossy fool should be given there, like a new masking-habit after the masquerade is over, and we have done with the disguise. For a fool's visit is always a disguise; and never admitted by a woman of wit, but to blind her affair with a lover of sense. If you would but appear barefaced now, and own Mirabell; you might as easily put off Petulant and Witwould, as your hood and scarf. And indeed 'tis time, for the town has found it; the secret is grown too big for the pretence: 'tis like Mrs. Primley's great belly; she may lace it down before, but it bur-nishes on her hips.—Indeed, Millamant, you can no more conceal it, than my Lady Strammel can her face, that goodly face, which, in defiance of her Rhenish-wine tea, will not be comprehended in a mask.

Mill. I'll take my death, Marwood, you are more censorious than a decay'd beauty, or a discarded toast. Mincing, tell the men they may come up. My aunt is not dressing here; their folly is less provoking than your malice. [Exit Mincing.] The town has found it! What has it found? That Mirabell loves me, is no more a secret, than it is a secret that you discover'd it to my aunt, or than the reason why you discovered it is a secret.

Mrs. Mar. You are nettled.

Mill. You're mistaken. Ridiculous!

Mrs. Mar. Indeed, my dear, you'll tear another fan, if you don't mitigate those violent airs,

Mill. Oh, silly! Ha, ha, ha! I could laugh immoderately. Poor Mirabell! His constancy to me has quite destroyed his complaisance for all the world beside.—I swear, I never enjoin'd it to him, to be so coy.—If I had the vanity to think he would obey me, I would command him to shew more gallantry. 'Tis hardly well-bred to be so particular

in one hand, and so insensible on the other. But I despair to prevail, and so let him follow his own way. Ha, ha, ha! Pardon me, dear creature, I must laugh, ha, ha, ha! though I grant you, 'tis a little barbarous, ha, ha, ha!

Mrs. Mar. What pity 'tis, so much fine raillery, and deliver'd with so significant gesture, should be so unhappily directed to miscarry!

Mill. Ha! Dear creature, I ask your pardon—I swear I did not mind you.

Mrs. Mar. Mr. Mirabell and you both may think a thing impossible, when I shall tell him by telling you—

Mill. O dear, what? for 't is the same thing, if I hear it—Ha, ha, ha!

Mrs. Mar. That I detest him, hate him, madam.

Mill. O, madam, why so do I—And yet the creature loves me; ha, ha, ha! How can one forbear laughing to think of it?—I am a Sybil if I am not amazed to think what he can see in me. I'll take my death, I think you are handsomer—and within a year or two as young—if you could but stay for me, I should overtake you—But that cannot be—Well, that thought makes me melancholic—Now, I'll be sad.

Mrs. Mar. Your merry note may be changed sooner than you think.

Mill. D'ye say so? Then I'm resolved I'll have a song to keep up my spirits.

MINCING enters.

Min. The gentlemen stay but to comb, madam; and will wait on you.

“*Mill.* Desire Mrs. ——, that is in the next room, to “ sing the song I would have learnt yesterday.—You shall “ hear it, madam—Not that there's any great matter in it—“ But 't is agreeable to my humour.

“ SONG.

I.

“ Love’s but the frailty of the mind,
 “ When’t is not with ambition join’d ;
 “ A sickly flame, which if not fed expires ;
 “ And feeding, wastes in self-consuming fires.

II.

“ ’Tis not to wound a wanton boy
 “ Or am’rous youth, that gives the joy ;
 “ But ’t is the glory to have pierc’d a swain,
 “ For whom inferior beauties sigh’d in vain.

III.

“ Then I alone the conquest prize,
 “ When I insult a rival’s eyes :
 “ If there’s delight in love, ’t is when I see
 “ That heart which others bleed for, bleed for me.”

PETULANT and WITWOULD enter.

Mill. Is your animosity composed, gentlemen?

Wit. Raillery, raillery, madam ; we have no animosity—We hit off a little wit now and then, but no animosity—The falling-out of wits is like the falling out of lovers—We agree in the main, like treble and base. Ha, Petulant !

Pet. Ay, in the main—but when I have a humour to contradict—

Wit. Ay, when he has a humour to contradict, then I contradict too. What, I know my cue. Then we contradict one another like two battledores ; for contradictions beget one another like Jews.

Pet. If he says black 's black—If I have a humour to say 'tis blue—Let that pass—All's one for that—if I have a humour to prove it, it must be granted.

Wit. Not positively must—but it may—it may.

Pet. Yes, it positively must, upon proof positive.

Wit. Ay, upon proof positive it must; but upon proof presumptive it only may. That's a logical distinction now, madam.

Mrs. Mar. I perceive your debates are of importance, and very learnedly handled.

Pet. Importance is one thing, and learning's another; but a debate's a debate, that I assert.

Wit. Petulant's an enemy to learning; he relies altogether on his parts.

Pet. No, I'm no enemy to learning; it hurts not me.

Mrs. Mar. That's a sign indeed 'tis no enemy to you.

Pet. No, no; 'tis no enemy to any body, but them that have it.

Mill. Well, an illiterate man's my aversion. I wonder at the impudence of an illiterate man, to offer to make love.

Wit. That I confess I wonder at too.

Mill. Ay, to marry an ignorant! that can hardly read or write.

Pet. Why should a man be any further from being married though he can't read, than he is from being hang'd? The ordinary is paid for setting the Psalm, and the parish priest for reading the ceremony. And for the rest which is to follow in both cases, a man may do it without book—So all's one for that.

Mill. D'ye hear the creature?—Lord, here's company, I'll be gone.

[*Exeunt Millamant and Mincing.*]

Sir WILFUL WITWOULD enters in a Riding-dress, and
Footman.

Wit. In the name of Bartholomew and his fair, what have
we here?

Mrs. Mar. 'Tis your brother, I fancy. Don't you know
him?

Wit. Not I—Yes, I think it is he—I've almost forgot
him; I have not seen him since the Revolution.

Foot. Sir, my lady's dressing. Here's company; if you
please to walk in, in the mean time.

Sir Wil. Dressing! What, 'tis but morning here I warrant
with you in London; we should count it towards afternoon
in our parts, down in Shropshire—Why then belike my aunt
ha'n't dined yet—Ha, friend?

Foot. Your aunt, sir?

Sir Wil. My aunt, sir? yes, my aunt, sir; and your lady,
sir; your lady is my aunt, sir—Why, what dost thou not
know me, friend? Why then send somebody hither that
does. How long hast thou lived with thy lady, fellow, ha?

Foot. A week, sir; longer than any in the house, except
my lady's woman.

Sir Wil. Why then belike thou dost not know thy lady,
if thou seest her; ha, friend?

Foot. Why truly, sir, I cannot safely swear to her face in
a morning, before she is dress'd. 'Tis like I may give a
shrewd guess at her by this time.

Sir Wil. Well, pr'ythee, try what thou canst do; if thou
canst not guess, inquire her out; dost hear, fellow? and
tell her, her nephew, Sir Wilful Witwould, is in the house.

Foot. I shall, sir.

Sir Wil. Hold ye, hear me, friend; a word with you in
your ear. Pr'ythee, who are these gallants?

Foot. Really, sir, I can't tell ; here come so many here, 'tis hard to know 'em all. [Exit.

Sir Wil. 'Oons, this fellow knows less than a starling ; I don't think a'knows his own name.

Mrs. Mar. Mr. Witwould, your brother is not behind hand in forgetfulness—I fancy he has forgot you too.

Wit. I hope so—The deuce take him that remembers first, I say.

Sir Wil. Save you, gentlemen and lady.

Mrs. Mar. For shame, Mr. Witwould ; why won't you speak to him ?—And you, sir.

Wit. Petulant, speak.

Pet. And you, sir.

Sir Wil. No offence, I hope.

[Salutes Marwood.]

Mrs. Mar. No sure, sir.

Wit. This is a vile dog, I see that already, No offence ! Ha, ha, ha ! to him ; to him, Petulant ; smoke him.

Pet. It seems as if you had come a journey, sir; hem, hem !

[Surveying him round.]

Sir Wil. Very likely, sir, that it may seem so.

Pet. No offence, I hope, sir.

Sir Wil. May be not, sir ; thereafter as 'tis meant, sir.

Wit. Smoke the boots, the boots, Petulant, the boots ; ha, ha, ha !

Pet. Sir, I presume upon the information of your boots.

Sir Wil. Why, 'tis like you may, sir : if you are not satisfied with the information of my boots, sir, if you will step to the stable, you may inquire further of my horse, sir.

Pet. Your horse, sir ! your horse is an ass, sir !

Sir Wil. Do you speak by way of offence, sir ?

Mrs. Mar. The gentleman's merry, that's all, sir—'Slife, we shall have a quarrel betwixt an horse and ass, before they find one another out. You must not take any thing amiss from your friends, sir. You are among your friends,

here, though it may be you don't know it. If I am not mistaken, you are Sir Wilful Witwould.

Sir Wil. Right, lady; I am Sir Wilful Witwould, so I write myself; no offence to any body, I hope; and nephew to the Lady Wishfort of this mansion.

Mrs. Mar. Don't you know this gentleman, sir?

Sir Wil. Hum! What, sure 'tis not. Yea, by'r lady, but 'tis—'Sheart I know not whether 'tis or no—Yea, but 'tis, by the Wrekin. Brother Anthony! What, Tony, i'faith! What dost thou not know me? By'r lady nor I thee, thou art so belaced, and so beperiwig'd—'Sheart, why dost not speak?—art thou o'erjoyed?

Wit. 'Odso, brother, is it you? your servant, brother.

Sir Wil. Your servant! why your's, sir. Your servant again—'Sheart, and your friend and servant to that—And a—(*puff*) and a slap-dragon for your service, sir; "and a "hare's foot, and a hare's scut for your service, sir:" an you be so cold and so courtly!

Wit. No offence, I hope, brother.

Sir Wil. 'Sheart, sir, but there is, and much offence—A plague! is this your Inns o'Court breeding, not to know your friends and your relations, your elders, and your betters?

Wit. Why, brother Wilful of Salop, you may be as short as a Shrewsbury cake, if you please. But I tell you 'tis not modish to know relations in town. You think you're in the country, where great lubberly brothers slabber and kiss one another when they meet, like a call of serjeants—'Tis not the fashion here; 'tis not indeed, dear brother.

Sir Wil. The fashion's a fool; and you're a fop, dear brother. 'Sheart, I've suspected this—By'r lady I conjectured you were a fop, since you began to change the style of your letters, and write on a scrap of paper gilt round the edges, no bigger than a subpoena. I might expect this when you left off—honour'd brother; and—hoping you are in good

health, and so forth—To begin with a *Rat me, knight, I'm so sick of a last night's debauch*—Odds heart, and then tell a familiar tale of a cock and a bull, and a wench and a bottle, and so conclude. You could write news before you were out of your time, when you lived with honest Pimple-Nose, the Attorney of Furnival's Inn—You could intreat to be remembered then to your friends round the Wrekin. “We ‘ould have Gazettes then, and Dawks’s letter, and the ‘ weekly bill, till of late days.”

Pet. 'Slife, Witwould, were you ever an attorney's clerk? Of the family of the Furnivals, ha, ha, ha!

Wit. Ay, ay, but that was for a while. Not long, not long; pshaw, I was not in my own power then. An orphan, and this fellow was my guardian; ay, ay, I was glad to consent to that, man, to come to London. He had the disposal of me then. If I had not agreed to that, I might have been bound 'prentice to a felt-maker in Shrewsbury; this fellow would have bound me to a maker of felts.

Sir Wil. 'Sheart, and better than be bound to a maker of fops; where, I suppose, you have served your time; and now you may set up for yourself.

Mrs. Mar. You intend to travel, sir, as I'm informed.

Sir Wil. Belike I may, madam. I may chance to sail upon the salt seas, if my mind hold.

Pet. And the wind serve.

Sir Wil. Serve or not serve, I sha'n't ask licence of you, sir; nor the weather-cock your companion. I direct my discourse to the lady, sir. 'Tis like my aunt may have told you, madam—Yes, I have settled my concerns, I may say now, and am minded to see foreign parts. If an how the peace hold, whereby that taxes abate.

Mrs. Mar. I thought you had designed for France at all adventures.

Sir Wil. I can't tell that; 'tis like I may, and 'tis like I

may not. I am somewhat dainty in making a resolution; because when I make it, I keep it. I don't stand shill-I, shall-I, then; if I say 't, I'll do 't: but I have thoughts to tarry a small matter in town, to learn somewhat of your lingo first, before I cross the seas. I'd gladly have a spice of your French as they say, whereby to hold discourse in foreign countries.

Mrs. Mar. Here's an academy in town for that and dancing, and curious accomplishments, calculated purely for the use of grown gentlemen.

Sir Wil. Is there? 'tis like there may.

Mrs. Mar. No doubt you will return very much improved.

Wit. Yes, refin'd like a Dutch skipper from a whale fishing.

Lady WISHFORT and FAINALL enter.

*L. Wish.** Nephew, you are welcome.

Sir Wil. Aunt, your servant.

Fain. Sir Wilful, your most faithful servant.

Sir Wil. Cousin Fainall, give me your hand.

L. Wish. Cousin Witwould, your servant; Mr. Petulant, your servant—Nephew, you are welcome again. Will you drink any thing after your journey, nephew, before you eat? dinner's almost ready.

Sir Wil. I'm very well, I thank you, aunt—However, I thank you for your courteous offer. 'Sheart, I was afraid you would have been in the fashion too, and have remember'd to have forgot your relations. Here's your cousin, Tony; belike I may n't call him brother for fear of offence.

L. Wish. O, he's a rallier, nephew—My cousin's a wit; and your great wits always rally their best friends to choose. When you have been abroad, nephew, you'll understand raillery better. [Fainall and Mrs. Marwood talk apart.

Sir Wil. Why then let him hold his tongue in the mean time ; and rail when that day comes.

MINCING enters.

Min. Mem, I am come to acquaint your laship that dinner is impatient.

Sir Wil. Impatient ! why then belike it won't stay till I pull off my boots. Sweet-heart, can you help me to a pair of slippers ?—My man's with his horses, I warrant.

L. Wisb. Fy, fy, nephew, you would not pull off your boots here—Go down into the hall—dinner shall stay for you—[*Exeunt Mincing and Sir Wilful.*]—My nephew's a little unbred, you'll pardon him, madam. Gentlemen, will you walk ? Marwood ?

Mrs. Mar. I'll follow you, madam, before Sir Wilful is ready. [*Exeunt Lady Wish. Petul. and Witwould.*]

Fain. Why then Foible's a procuress ; an errant, rank, " match-making procuress. And I, it seems, am a husband, a rank husband ; and my wife a very errant, rank wife—all in the way of the world.—“ ‘ Sdeath ! to be a cuckold by “ anticipation, a cuckold in embryo ! Sure I was born with “ budding antlers like a young satyr, or a citizen's child.’ ” Sdeath ! to be out-witted, out-jilted—out-matrimony'd—“ If I had kept my speed like a stag, 'twere somewhat—“ but to crawl after, with my horns like a snail, and be out—“ stripp'd by my wife” —‘ tis scurvy wedlock.

Mrs. Mar. Then shake it off ; you have often wish'd for an opportunity to part—and now you have it.—But first prevent their plot—the half of Millamant's fortune is too considerable to be parted with to a foe, to Mirabell.

Fain. Ay, that had been mine—had you not made that fond discovery—That had been forfeited, had they been married. My wife had added lustre to my dishonour by

that increase of fortune. I could have worn 'em tipt with gold, though my forehead had been furnish'd like a deputy-lieutenant's hall.

Mrs. Mar. They may prove a cap of maintenance to you still, if you can away with your wife. And she's no worse than when you had her—I dare swear she had given up her game before she was married.

Fain. Hum! that may be——

Mrs. Mar. You married her to keep you; and if you can contrive to have her keep you better than you expected, why should you not keep her longer than you intended?

Fain. The means, the means?

Mrs. Mar. Discover to my lady your wife's conduct; threaten to part with her—My lady loves her, and will come to any composition to save her reputation. Take the opportunity of breaking it, just upon the discovery of this imposture. My lady will be enraged beyond bounds, and sacrifice niece and fortune, and all at that conjuncture. And let me alone to keep her warm; if she should flag in her part, I will not fail to prompt her.

Fain. This has an appearance.

Mrs. Mar. I'm sorry I hinted to my lady to endeavour a match between Millamant and Sir Wilful; that may be an obstacle.

Fain. O, for that matter leave me to manage him; I'll disable him for that, he will drink like a Dane: after dinner, I'll set his hand in.

Mrs. Mar. Well, how do you stand affected towards your lady?

Fain. Why, faith, I'm thinking of it.—Let me see—I am married already; so that's over—My wife has play'd the jade with me—Well, that's over too—I never lov'd her, or if I had, why that would have been over too by this time—

Jealous of her I cannot be, for I am certain ; so there 's an end of jealousy. Weary of her, I am and shall be—No, there 's no end of that ; no, no, that were too much to hope. Thus far concerning my repose. Now for my reputation—As to my own, I married not for it ; so that 's out of the question. And as to my part in my wife's—why she had parted with her's before ; so bringing none to me, she can take none from me ; it is against all rule of play, that I should lose to one, who has not wherewithal to stake.

Mrs. Mar. Besides you forget, marriage is honourable.

Fain. Hum ! faith and that 's well thought on ; marriage is honourable, as you say ; and if so, wherefore should cuckledom be a discredit, being derived from so honourable a root ?

Mrs. Mar. Nay, I know not ; if the root be honourable, why not the branches ?

Fain. So, so, why this point 's clear—Well, how do we proceed ?

Mrs. Mar. I will contrive a letter which shall be deliver'd to my lady at the time when that rascal, who is to act Sir Rowland, is with her. It shall come as from an unknown hand—for the less I appear to know of the truth, the better I can play the incendiary. Besides, I would not have Foible provok'd if I could help it ; because you know she knows some passages—Nay, I expect all will come out—But let the mine be sprung first, and then I care not if I am discovered.

Fain. If the worst come to the worst—I 'll turn my wife to grass—I have already a deed of settlement of the best part of her estate, which I wheedled out of her ; and that you shall partake, at least.

Mrs. Mar. I hope you are convinced that I hate Mirabell now : you 'll be no more jealous.

Fain, Jealous ! no—by this kiss—let husbands be jealous ; but let the lover still believe : or if he doubt, let it be only to endear his pleasure, and prepare the joy that follows, when he proves his mistress true.—But let husbands' doubts convert to endless jealousy ; or if they have belief, let it corrupt to superstition, and blind credulity. I am single, and will herd no more with 'em. True, I wear the badge, but I'll disown the order. And since I take my leave of 'em, I care not if I leave 'em a common motto to their common crest.

All husbands must, or pain, or shame endure ;

The wise too jealous are, fools too secure.

[Exeunt.]

ACT IV. SCENE I.

Continues. Lady WISHFORT and FOIBLE.

Lady Wishfort.

Is Sir Rowland coming, say'st thou, Foible ? and are things in order ?

Foi. Yes, madam. I have put wax lights in the sconces, and placed the footmen in a row in the hall in their best liveries, with the coachman and postillion to fill up the equipage.

L. Wish. Have you pulvill'd the coachman and postillion, that they may not stink of the stable, when Sir Rowland comes by ?

Foi. Yes, madam.

L. Wish. And are the dancers and the music ready, that he may be entertained in all points with correspondence to his passion ?

Foi. All is ready, madam.

L. Wish. And—well—and how do I look, Foible?

Foi. Most killing well, madam.

L. Wish. Well, and how shall I receive him? in what figure shall I give his heart the first impression? There is a great deal in the first impression. Shall I sit?—No, I won't sit—I'll walk—ay, I'll walk from the door upon his entrance; and then turn full upon him—No, that will be too sudden. I'll lie—ay, I'll lie down—I'll receive him in my little dressing-room. There's a couch—Yes, yes, I'll give the first impression on a couch—I won't lie neither, but loll and lean upon one elbow, with one foot a little dangling off, jogging in a thoughtful way—Yes—and then as soon as he appears, start—ay, start and be surprised, and rise to meet him in a pretty disorder—Yes—O, nothing is more alluring than a levee from a couch in some confusion—it shews the foot to advantage, and furnishes with blushes, and re-composing airs beyond comparison. Hark! there's a coach.

Foi. 'Tis he, madam.

L. Wish. O dear, has my nephew made his addresses to Millamant? I ordered him.

Foi. Sir Wilful is set in to drinking, madam, in the parlour.

L. Wish. Odds my life, I'll send him to her. Call her down, Foible; bring her hither. I'll send him as I go—When they are together, then come to me, Foible, that I may not be too long alone with Sir Rowland. [Exit.]

MILLAMANT and MRS. FAINALL enter.

Foi. Madam, I staid here, to tell your ladyship that Mr. Mirabell has waited this half hour for an opportunity to talk with you. Though my lady's orders were to leave you and

Sir Wilful together. Shall I tell Mr. Mirabell that you are at leisure?

Mil. No—what would the dear man have? I am thoughtful, and would amuse myself.—Bid him come another time.

*There never yet was woman made,
Nor shall, but to be curs'd.*

[Repeating, and walking about.

That's hard!

Mrs. Fain. You are very fond of Sir John Suckling today, Millamant, and the poets.

Mill. He? ay, and filthy verses—So I am.

Foi. Sir Wilful is coming, madam. Shall I send Mr. Mirabell away?

Mill. Ay, if you please, Foible, send him away—or send him hither—just as you will, dear Foible.—I think I'll see him—Shall I? ay, let the wretch come.

Thyrsis, a youth of the inspired train. [Repeating.

Dear Fainall, entertain Sir Wilful—Thou hast philosophy to undergo a fool, thou art married and hast patience—I would confer with my own thoughts.

Mrs. Fain. I am obliged to you, that you would make me your proxy in this affair; but I have business of my own.

Sir WILFUL enters.

Mrs. Fain. O, Sir Wilful, you are come at the critical instant. There's your mistress up to the ears in love and contemplation; pursue your point, now or never.

Sir Wil. Yes; my aunt will have it so—I would gladly have been encouraged with a bottle or two, because I'm somewhat wary at first, before I am acquainted;—but I hope, after a time, I shall break my mind—that is upon far-

ther acquaintance—[*This while Milla walks about repeating to herself.*] So for the present, cousin, I'll take my leave—If so be you'll be so kind to make my excuse, I'll return to my company—

Mrs. Fain. O fie, Sir Wilful! what, you must not be daunted.

Sir Wil. Daunted, no, that's not it; it is not so much for that—for if so be that I set on't, I'll do 't. But only for the present, 'tis sufficient till further acquaintance, that's all—your servant.

Mrs. Fain. Nay, I'll swear you shall never lose so favourable an opportunity, if I can help it. I'll leave you together, and lock the door.

[*Exeunt Mrs. Fainall and Foible.*]

Sir Wil. Nay, nay, cousin—I have forgot my gloves. What d'ye do? 'Sheart, a'has locked the door indeed, I think—Nay, Cousin Fainall, open the door—Pshaw, what a vixen trick is this!—Nay, now a'has seen me too—Cousin, I made bold to pass through as it were—I think this door's enchanted.

Mill. [*Repeating.*]

*I pr'ythee spare me, gentle boy,
Press me no more for that slight toy.*

Sir Wil. Anan? Cousin, your servant.

Mill.—*That foolish trifle of a heart—*

—Sir Wilful!

Sir Wil. Yes—your servant. No offence I hope, cousin.

Mill. [*Repeating.*]

*I swear it will not do its part,
Tho' thou dost thine, employ'st thy power and art.*

Natural, easy Suckling!

Sir Wil. Anan? Suckling? No such suckling neither, cousin, nor stripling: I thank Heaven, I'm no minor.

Mill. Ah, rustic, ruder than Gothic.

Sir Wil. Well; well, I shall understand your lingo one of these days, cousin, in the mean while I must answer in plain English.

Mill. Have you any business with me, Sir Wilful?

Sir Wil. Not, at present, cousin.—Yes, I made bold to see, to come and know if that how you were disposed to fetch a walk this evening, if so be that I might not be troublesome, I would have sought a walk with you.

Mill. A walk! what then?

Sir Wil. Nay, nothing—Only for the walk's sake, that's all—

Mill. I nauseate walking; 'tis a country diversion; I loathe the country, and every thing that relates to it.

Sir Wil. Indeed! hah! look ye, you do? nay, 'tis like you may—Here are choice of pastimes here in town, as plays and the like, that must be confessed, indeed.

Mill. Ab l'étourdie! I hate the town too.

Sir Wil. Dear heart, that's much—“Hah!” that you should hate 'em both! hah! 'tis like you may; there are some can't relish the town, and others can't away with the country—'tis like you may be one of those, cousin.

Mill. Ha, ha, ha! Yes, 'tis like I may.—You have nothing further to say to me?

Sir Wil. Not at present, cousin.—'T is like when I have an opportunity to be more private—I may break my mind in some measure—I conjecture you partly guess.—However, that's as time shall try—but spare to speak and spare to speed, as they say.

Mill. If it is of no great importance, Sir Wilful, you will oblige me by leaving me. I have just now a little business—

Sir Wil. Enough, enough, cousin: yes, yes, all a case—
When you're disposed. Now's as well as another time;
and another time as well as now. All's one for that—
Yes, yes, if your concerns call you, there's no haste; it
will keep cold, as they say—Cousin, your servant.—
I think this door's locked.

Mill. You may go this way, sir.

Sir Wil. Your servant; then with your leave I'll return
to my company. [Exit.

Mill. Ay, ay; ha, ha, ha!

Like Phœbus sung the no less am'rous boy.

MIRABELL enters.

Mira. Like Daphne she, as lovely and as coy.
Do you lock yourself up from me, to make my search more
curious? Or is this pretty artifice contrived, to signify that
here the chace must end, and my pursuit be crowned, for
you can fly no further?

Mill. Vanity! No—I'll fly, and be followed to the last
moment; though I am upon the very verge of matrimony,
I expect you should solicit me as much as if I were wavering
at the grate of a monastery, with one foot over the
threshold. I'll be solicited to the very last, nay, and afterwards.

Mira. What, after the last?

Mill. O, I should think I was poor, and had nothing to
bestow, if I were reduced to an inglorious ease; and freed
from the agreeable fatigues of solicitation.

Mira. But do not you know, that when favours are con-
ferred upon instant and tedious solicitation, that they dimi-
nish in their value, and that both the giver loses the grace,
and the receiver lessens his pleasure?

Mill. It may be in things of common application ; but never sure in love. O, I hate a lover, that can dare to think he draws a moment's air, independent on the bounty of his mistress. There is not so impudent a thing in nature, as the saucy look of an assured man, confident of success. The pedantic arrogance of a very husband has not so pragmatical an air.—Ah ! I'll never marry, unless I am first made sure of my will and pleasure.

Mira. Would you have 'em both before marriage ? Or will you be content with only the first now, “ and stay for “ the other till after grace ? ”

Mill. Ah ! don't be impertinent—My dear liberty, shall I leave thee ? My faithful solitude, my darling contemplation, must I bid you then adieu ? Ay, adieu—My morning thoughts, agreeable wakings, indolent slumbers, ye *douc'eurs, ye sommeils du matin,* adieu—I cant do 't, 't is more than impossible—Possibly, Mirabell, I'll lie a-bed in a morning as long as I please.

Mira. Then I'll get up in a morning as early as I please.

Mill. Ah ! idle creature, get up when you will—And, d'ye hear, I won't be called names after I am married ; positively I won't be called names.

Mira. Names !

Mill. Ay, as wife, spouse, my dear, joy, jewel, love, sweetheart, and the rest of that nauseous cant, in which men and their wives are so fulsomely familiar—I shall never bear that—Good Mirabell, don't let us be familiar or fond, nor kiss before folks, like my Lady Fadler and Sir Francis ; nor go in public together the first Sunday in a new chariot, to provoke eyes and whispers ; and then never be seen there together again ; as if we were proud of one another the first week, and ashamed of one another ever after. Let us never visit together, nor go to a play toge-

ther, but let us be very strange and well-bred : let us be as strange as if we had been married a great while ; and as well-bred as if we were not married at all.

Mira. Have you any more conditions to offer ? hitherto your demands are pretty reasonable.

Mill. Trifles—as liberty to pay and receive visits, to and from whom I please ; to write and receive letters without interrogatories or wry faces on your part ; to wear what I please, and choose conversation with regard only to my own taste ; to have no obligation upon me to converse with wits that I don't like, because they are your acquaintance ; or to be intimate with fools, because they may be your relations. Come to dinner when I please ; dine in my dressing-room when I'm out of humour, without giving a reason. To have my closet inviolate ; to be sole empress of my tea-table, which you must never presume to approach without first asking leave. And lastly, wherever I am, you shall always knock at the door before you come in. These articles subscribed, if I continue to endure you a little longer, I may by degrees dwindle into a wife.

Mira. Your bill of fare is something advanced in this latter account. Well, have I liberty to offer conditions—That when you are dwindled into a wife, I may not be beyond measure enlarged into a husband ?

Mill. You have free leave ; propose your utmost ;—speak and spare not.

Mira. I thank you. *Imprimis* then, I covenant that your acquaintance be general ; that you admit no sworn confidant, or intimate of your own sex : No she friend to skreen her affairs under your countenance, and tempt you to make trial of a mutual secrecy. No decoy-duck to wheedle you a fop-scrambling to the play in a mask ; then bring you home in a pretended fright, when you think you shall be

found out; and rail at me for missing the play, and disappointing the frolic which you had to pick me up and prove my constancy.

Mill. Detestable *Imprimis!* I go to the play in a mask!

Mira. *Item,* I article that you continue to like your own face, as long as I shall: and while it passes current with me, that you endeavour not to new coin it. To which end, together with all wizards for the day, I prohibit all masks for the night made of oiled-skins, and I know not what—“Hog’s-bones, hare’s-gall, pig-water, and the marrow of “a roasted cat.” In short, I forbid all commerce with the gentlewoman in What-d’ye-call-it court. *Item,* I shut my door against all procuresses with baskets, and pennyworths of muslin, china, fans, &c. *Item,* when you shall be breeding—

Mill. Ah! name it not.

“*Mira.* Which may be presumed, with a blessing on our “endeavours—

“*Mill.* Odious endeavours!”

Mira. I denounce against all strait-lacing, squeezing for a shape, till you mould my boy’s head like a sugar-loaf! and, instead of a man-child make me father to a crooked billet. Lastly, to the dominion of the tea-table I submit.—But with *proviso*, that you exceed not in your province; but restrain yourself to native and simple tea-table drinks, as tea, chocolate, and coffee. As likewise to genuine and authorized tea-table talk—Such as mending of fashions, spoiling reputations, railing at absent friends, and so forth—But that on no account you encroach upon the men’s prerogative, and presume to drink healths, or toast fellows; for prevention of which I banish all foreign forces, all auxiliaries to the tea-table, as orange-brandy, all anniseed, cinnamon, citron, and Barbadoes-waters, together with ratafia,

and the most noble spirit of Clary.—But for cowslip wine, poppy-water, and all dormitives, those I allow.—These *provisos* admitted, in other things I may prove a tractable and complying husband.

Mill. O, horrid *provisos*! filthy strong waters! I toast fellows, odious men! I hate your odious *provisos*.

Mira. Then we're agreed. Shall I kiss your hand upon the contract? and here comes one to be a witness to the sealing of the deed.

Mrs. FAINALL enters.

Mill. Fainall, what shall I do? shall I have him? I think I must have him.

Mrs. Fain. Ay, ay, take him, take him; what should you do?

Mill. Well then—I'll take my death I'm in a horrid fright—Fainall, I shall never say it—well—I think—I'll endure you.

Mrs. Fain. Fie, fie, have him, have him, and tell him so in plain terms: for I am sure you have a mind to him.

Mill. Are you? I think I have—and the horrid man looks as if he thought so, too—Well, you ridiculous thing you, I'll have you—I won't be kiss'd, nor I won't be thanked—Here, kiss my hand though—so hold your tongue now, don't say a word.

Mrs. Fain. Mirabell, there's a necessity for your obedience; you have neither time to talk, nor stay. My mother is coming; and in my conscience if she should see you, would fall into fits, and may be not recover time enough to return to Sir Rowland, who, as Foible tells me, is in a fair way to succeed. Therefore spare your ecstacies for another occasion, and slip down the back-stairs, where Foible waits to consult you.

Mill. Ay, go, go. In the mean time I'll suppose you have said something to please me.

Mira. I am all obedience.

[Exit.]

Mrs. Fain. Yonder's Sir Wilful drunk! and so noisy, that my mother has been forced to leave Sir Rowland to appease him; but he answers her only with singing and drinking—what they may have done by this time I know not; but Petulant and he were upon quarrelling as I came by.

Mill. Well, if Mirabell should not make a good husband, I am a lost thing; for I find I love him violently.

Mrs. Fain. So it seems; for you mind not what's said to you.—If you doubt him, you had better take up with Sir Wilful.

Mill. How can you name that superannuated lubber? foh!

WITWOULD enters, from drinking.

Mrs. Fain. So, is the fray made up, that you have left 'em?

Wit. Left 'em? I could stay no longer—I have laugh'd like ten christenings—I am tipsy with laughing—if I had staid any longer I should have burst—I must have been let out and pierced in the sides like an unsized camlet—Yes, yes, the fray is composed; my lady came in like a *noli prosequi*, and stopt the proceedings.

Mill. What was the dispute?

Wit. That's the jest; there was no dispute. They could neither of 'em speak for rage; and so fell a sputtering at one another like two roasting apples.

PETULANT enters, drunk.

Now, Petulant? all's over, all's well? 'gad, my head begins to whim it about—Why dost thou not speak? thou art both as drunk and as mute as a fish.

Pet. Look you, Mrs. Millamant—if you can love me, dear nymph—say it—and that's the conclusion—pass on, or pass off—that's all.

Wit. Thou hast uttered volumes, folios, in less than *decimo sexto*, my dear Lacedæmonian. Sirrah, Petulant, thou art an epitomizer of words.

Pet. Witwould—You are an annihilator of sense.

Wit. Thou art a retailer of phrases; and dost deal in remnants of remnants, like a maker of pin-cushions—thou art in truth (metaphorically speaking) a speaker of short-hand.

Pet. Thou art (without a figure) just one half of an ass, and Baldwin yonder, thy half-brother, is the rest--a gemini of asses split, would make just four of you.

Wit. Thou dost bite, my dear mustard-seed; kiss me for that.

Pet. Stand off—I'll kiss no more males.—I have kissed your twin yonder in a humour of reconciliation, till he [*Hiccup.*] rises upon my stomach like a radish.

Mill. Eh! filthy creature---what was the quarrel?

Pet. There was no quarrel—there might have been a quarrel.

Wit. If there had been words enow between 'em to have expressed provocation, they had gone together by the ears like a pair of castanets.

Pet. You were the quarrel.

Mill. Me!

Pet. If I have the humour to quarrel, I can make less matters conclude premises—if you are not handsome, what then; if I have a humour to prove it?—if I shall have my reward, say so: if not, fight for your face the next time yourself—I'll go sleep.

Wit. Do wrap thyself up like a woodlouse, and dream revenge—And hear me, if thou canst learn to write by to-

morrow morning, pen me a challenge—I'll carry it for thee.

Pet. Carry your mistress's monkey a spider—go flea dogs, and read romances—I'll go to bed “to my maid.”

[Exit.]

Mrs. Fain. He's horribly drunk—how came you all in this pickle?

Wit. A plot, a plot, to get rid of the knight.—Your husband's advice; but he sneak'd off.

Sir WILFUL, drunk, and Lady WISHFORT enter.

L. *Wish.* Out upon't, out upon't! at years of discretion, and comport yourself at this rantipole rate!

Sir *Wil.* No offence, aunt.

L. *Wish.* Offence! as I'm a person, I'm ashamed of you—foh! how you stink of wine! D'ye think my niece will ever endure such a borachio? you're an absolute borachio.

Sir *Wil.* Borachio!

L. *Wish.* At a time when you should commence an amour, and put your best foot foremost—

Sir *Wil.* 'Sheart, and you grutch me your liquor, make a bill—give me more drink, and take my purse. [Sings.]

*Pr'ythee fill me the glass
 'Till it laugh in my face,
 With ale that is potent and mellow;
 He that whines for a lass
 Is an ignorant ass,
 For a bumper has not its fellow.*

But if you would have me marry my cousin—say the word, and I'll do't—Wilful will do't, that's the word—Wilful will do't, that's my crest—my motto, I have forgot.

L. Wish. My nephew's a little overtaken, cousin—but 'tis with drinking your health—O' my word, you are obliged to him—

Sir Wil. *In vino veritas*, aunt: if I drank your health to day, cousin—I am a borachio. But if you have a mind to be married, say the word, and send for the piper; Wilful will do't. If not, dust it away, and let's have 't other round—Tony, od's heart, where's Tony?—Tony's an honest fellow, but he spits after a bumper, and that's a fault.

[Sings.]

We'll drink, and we'll never ha' done, boys;

Put the glass then around with the sun, boys.

Let Apollo's example invite us;

For he's drunk ev'ry night,

And that makes him so bright,

That he's able next morning to light us.

The sun's a good pimple, an honest soaker, he has a cellar at your Antipodes. If I travel, aunt, I touch at your Antipodes—your Antipodes are a good rascally sort of topsy-turvy fellows—if I had a bumper I'd stand upon my head and drink a health to them—A match or no match, cousin with the hard name?—Aunt, Wilful will do't.
“If she has her maidenhead let her look to't; if she has “not, let her keep her own counsel in the mean time, and “cry out at the nine month's end.”

Mill. Your pardon, madam, I can stay no longer—Sir Wilful grows very powerful. Egh! how he smells! I shall be overcome if I stay. Come, cousin.

[*Exeunt Millamant and Mrs. Fainall.*]

L. Wish. Smells! he would poison a tallow-chandler and his family. Beastly creature! I know not what to do with him—Travel, quoth-a! ay, travel, travel, get thee gone,

get thee gone, get thee but far enough, to the Saracens, or the Tartars, or the Turks—for thou art not fit to live in a Christian commonwealth, thou beastly Pagan.

Sir Wil. Turks! no; no Turks, aunt; your Turks are infidels, and believe not in the grave. Your Mahometan, your Mussulman is a dry stinkard—No offence, aunt. My map says that your Turk is not so honest a man as your Christian—I cannot find by the map that your Mufti is orthodox—whereby it is a plain case, that orthodox is a hard word, aunt, and—[*Hiccup.*] Greek for claret. [Sings.

*To drink is a Christian diversion,
Unknown to the Turk or the Persian :
Let Mahometan fools
Live by Heathenish rules,
And be damn'd over tea-cups and coffee ;
But let British lads sing,
Crown a health to the king,
And a fig for your Sultan and Sophi.*

FOIBLE enters, and whispers LADY WISHLAND.

Eh, Tony!

L. Wish. Sir Rowland impatient? good lack! what shall I do with this beastly tumbrill?—go lie down and sleep, you sot—or, as I'm a person, I'll have you bastinadoed with broomsticks. Call up the wenches with broomsticks.

Sir Wil. Ahey? wenches, where are the wenches?

L. Wish. Dear cousin Witwould get him away, and you will bind me to you inviolably. I have an affair of moment that invades me with some precipitation—you will oblige me to all futurity.

Wit. Come, knight—plague on him, I don't know what to say to him.—Will you go to a cock-match?

Sir Wil. With a wench, Tony? "Is she a shakebag, " "sirrah?" let me bite your cheek for that.

Wit. Horrible! he has a breath like a bagpipe—Ay, ay; come will you march, my Salopian?

Sir Wil. Lead on, little Tony—I'll follow thee, my Anthony, my Tanthony; sirrah, thou shalt be my Tantony, and I'll be thy pig.

—*And a fig for your Sultan and Sophi.*

[*Exeunt Sir Wilful, Mr. Wit. and Foible.*

L. Wish. This will never do. It will never make a match
—At least before he has been abroad.

WAITWELL enters disguised as for Sir Rowland.

Dear Sir Rowland, I am confounded with confusion at the retrospection of my own rudeness. I have more pardons to ask than the Pope distributes in the year of Jubilee. But I hope where there is likely to be so near an alliance, we may unbend the severity of decorum, and dispense with a little ceremony.

Wait. My impatience, madam, is the effect of my transport; and till I have the possession of your adorable person, I am tantalized on the rack; and do but hang, madam, on the tenter of expectation.

L. Wish. You have excess of gallantry, Sir Rowland; and press things to a conclusion, with a most prevailing vehemence—But a day or two for decency of marriage.

Wait. For decency of funeral, madam. The delay will break my heart—or if that should fail, I shall be poisoned. My nephew will get an inkling of my designs and poison me—and I would willingly starve him before I die—I would gladly go out of the world with that satisfaction. That would be some comfort to me if I could but live so long as to be revenged on that unnatural viper.

L. *Wish.* Is he so unnatural, say you? truly I would contribute much both to the saving of your life, and the accomplishment of your revenge. Not that I respect myself; though he has been a perfidious wretch to me.

Wait. Perfidious to you!

L. *Wish.* O, Sir Rowland, the hours that he has died away at my feet, the tears that he has shed, the oaths that he has sworn, the palpitations that he has felt, the trances and tremblings, the ardours and the ecstacies, the kneelings and the risings, the heart-heavings and the hand-gripings, the pangs and the pathetic regards of his protesting eyes! Oh, no memory can register.

Wait. What, my rival! is the rebel my rival? a' dies.

L. *Wish.* No, don't kill him at once, Sir Rowland, starve him gradually, inch by inch.

Wait. I'll do't. In three weeks he shall be barefoot; in a month out at knees with begging an alms—he shall starve upward and upward, till he has nothing living but his head, and then go out in a stink like a candle's end upon a save-all.

L. *Wish.* Well, Sir Rowland, you have the way—You are no novice in the labyrinth of love—You have the clue—But, as I am a person, Sir Rowland, you must not attribute my yielding to any sinister appetite, or indigestion of widowhood; nor impute my complacency to any lethargy of continence—I hope you do not think me prone to any iteration of nuptials—

Wait. Far be it from me—

L. *Wish.* If you do, I protest I must recede—or think that I have made a prostitution of decorums; but in the vehemence of compassion, and to save the life of a person of so much importance—

Wait. I esteem it so—

L. *Wish.* Or else you wrong my condescension—

Wait. I do not, I do not—

L. *Wish.* Indeed you do.

Wait. I do not, fair shrine of virtue.

L. *Wish.* If you think the least scruple of carnality was an ingredient—

Wait. Dear madam, no. You are all camphire and frankincense, all chastity and odour.

L. *Wish.* Or that—

FOIBLE enters.

Foi. Madam, the dancers are ready, and there's one with a letter, who must deliver into your own hands.

L. *Wish.* Sir Rowland, will you give me leave? think favourably, judge candidly, and conclude you have found a person who would suffer racks in honour's cause, dear Sir Rowland, and will wait on you incessantly. [Exit.

Wait. Fie, fie!—What a slavery have I undergone! Spouse, hast thou any cordial? I want spirits.

Foi. What washy rogue art thou, to pant thus for a quarter of an hour's lying and swearing to a fine lady!

Wait. O, she is the antidote to desire. "Spouse, thou wilt fare the worse for't—I shall have no appetite to iteration of nuptials, this eight and forty hours." By this "I had rather be a chairman in the dog-days—than act Sir Rowland till this time to-morrow."

Lady WISHFORT enters, with a letter.

L. *Wish.* Call in the dancers;—Sir Rowland, we'll sit, if you please, and see the entertainment. [Dance.] Now with your permission, Sir Rowland, I will peruse my letter—I would open it in your presence, because I would not make you uneasy. If it should make you uneasy I would

burn it—speak if it does—but you may see, the superscription is like a woman's hand.

Foi. By heaven ! Mrs. Marwood's. I know it.—My heart aches—get it from her— [To him.]

Wait. A woman's hand ? No, madam, that's no woman's hand, I see that already. That's somebody whose throat must be cut.

L. Wish. Nay, Sir Rowland, since you give me a proof of your passion by your jealousy, I promise you I'll make a return by a frank communication—You shall see it—we'll open it together—look you here [Reads.] ‘ Madam, though unknown to you.’—(Look you there, 'tis from nobody that I know.)—‘ I have that honour for your character, that I think myself obliged to let you know you are abused. He who pretends to be Sir Rowland, is a cheat and a rascal’—O, heavens ! what's this ?

Foi. Unfortunate ! all's ruin'd !

Wait. How, how ! let me see, let me see—[Reading.] ‘ A rascal and disguised, and suborn'd for that imposture’—O, villany ! O, villany !—‘ By the contrivance of’—

L. Wish. I shall faint, I shall die, ho !

Foi. Say, 'tis your nephew's hand.—Quickly, his plot; swear it, swear it—

Wait. Here's a villain ! madam ; do n't you perceive it, don't you see it ?

L. Wish. Too well, too well. I have seen too much.

Wait. I told you at first I knew the hand—A woman's hand ! The rascal writes a sort of a large hand ; your Roman hand—I saw there was a throat to be cut presently. If he were my son, as he is my nephew, I'd pistol him.

Foi. O, treachery ! But are you sure, Sir Rowland, it is his writing ?

Wait. Sure ! Am I here ? Do I live ? Do I love this pearl

of India? I have twenty letters in my pocket from him, in the same character.

L. *Wish.* How!

Foi. O, what luck it is, Sir Rowland, that you were present at this juncture! this was the business that brought Mr. Mirabell disguised to Madam Millamant this afternoon. I thought something was contriving, when he stole by me, and would have hid his face.

L. *Wish.* How, how!—I heard the villain was in the house indeed; and now I remember my niece went away abruptly, when Sir Wilful was to have made his addresses.

Foi. Then, then, madam, Mr. Mirabell waited for her in her chamber; but I would not tell your ladyship, to discompose you when you were to receive Sir Rowland.

Wait. Enough; his date is short.

Foi. No, good Sir Rowland, don't incur the law.

Wait. Law! I care not for law. I can but die, and 'tis in a good cause—My lady shall be satisfied of my truth and innocence, though it cost me my life.

L. *Wish.* No, dear Sir Rowland, don't fight; if you should be killed I must never shew my face; or hang'd—O, consider my reputation, Sir Rowland—No, you sha'n't fight—I'll go in and examine my niece; I'll make her confess. I conjure you, Sir Rowland, by all your love not to fight.

Wait. I am charmed, madam; I obey. But some proof you must let me give you;—I'll go for a black box, which contains the writings of my whole estate, and deliver that into your hands.

L. *Wish.* Ay, dear Sir Rowland, that will be some comfort; bring the black box.

Wait. And may I presume to bring a contract to be signed this night? May I hope so far?

L. *Wishb.* Bring what you will ; but come alive, pray come alive. O, this is a happy discovery.

Wait. Dead or alive I'll come—and married we will be in spite of treachery ; “ ay, and get an heir that shall de-“feat the last remaining glimpse of hope in my abandoned “nephew.” Come, my buxom widow :

*Ere long you shall substantial proof receive
That I'm an arrant knight—*

Foi. —Or arrant knave.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT V. SCENE I.

Continues. Lady WISHFORT and FOIBLE.

Lady *Wishfort.*

OUT of my house, out of my house, thou viper, thou serpent, that I have fostered ; thou bosom traitress, that I raised from nothing— Begone, begone, begone, go, go— That I took from washing of old gauze and weaving of dead hair, with a bleak blue nose, over a chaffing dish of starved embers, and dining behind a traverse-rag, in a shop no bigger than a bird-cage—go, go, starve again, do, do.

Foi. Dear madam, I'll beg pardon on my knees.

L. *Wishb.* Away, out, out ; go set up for yourself again—do, drive a trade, do, with your threepennyworth of small ware, flaunting upon a packthread, under a brandy-seller's bulk, or against a dead-wall by a ballad-monger. Go, hang out an old frisoneer-gorget, with a yard of yellow Colberteen again ; do ; an old gnaw'd mask, two rows of pins, and a child's fiddle ; a glass necklace, with the beads broken,

and a quilted night-cap with one ear. Go, go, drive a trade.—These were your commodities, you treacherous trull, this was the merchandize you dealt in, when I took you into my house, placed you next myself and made you *gouvernante* of my whole family. You have forgot this, have you, now you have feather'd your nest?

Foil. No, no, dear madam. Do but hear me, have but a moment's patience—I'll confess all. Mr. Mirabell seduced me; I am not the first that he has wheedled with his dissembling tongue; your ladyship's own wisdom has been deluded by him, then how should I, a poor ignorant, defend myself? O, madam, if you knew but what he promised me, and how he assured me your ladyship should come to no damage—Or else the wealth of the Indies should not have bribed me to conspire against so good, so sweet, so kind a lady as you have been to me.

L. Wish. No damage! What, to betray me, and marry me to a cast serving-man; “to make me a receptacle, ~~an~~ “hospital for a decayed pimp?” No damage! O! thou frontless impudence, more than a big-bellied actress.

Foil. Pray do but hear me, madam; he could not marry your ladyship, madam—No, indeed, his marriage was to have been void in law; for he was married to me first, to secure your ladyship. “He could not have bedded your ladyship; for if he had consummated with your ladyship, “he must have run the risque of the law, and been put up “on his clergy,”—Yes, indeed, I inquired of the law in that case before I would meddle or make.

L. Wish. What, then I have been your property, have I? I have been convenient to you, it seems—While you were catering for Mirabell, I have been broker for you? “What “have you made a passive bawd of me?”—This exceeds all precedent; I am brought to fine uses, to become a botcher

of second-hand marriages between Abigail and Andrews ! I'll couple you. Yes, I'll baste you together, you and your Philander. I'll Duke's-Place you, as I'm a person. Your turtle is in custody already : you shall coo in the same cage, if there be a constable or warrant in the parish. [Exit.

Foi. O, that ever I was born ! O, that I was ever married ! —a bride, ay, I shall be a Bridewell bride, oh !—

Mrs. FAINALL enters.

Mrs. Fain. Poor Foible, what's the matter ?

Foi. O, madam, my lady's gone for a constable ; I shall be had to a justice, and put to Bridewell, to beat hemp ; poor Waitwell's gone to prison already.

Mrs. Fain. Have a good heart, Foible : Mirabell's gone to give security for him. This is all Marwood's and my husband's doing.

Foi. Yes, yes, I know it, madam ; she was in my lady's closet, and overheard all that you said to me before dinner. She sent the letter to my lady : and that missing effect, Mr. Fainall laid this plot to arrest Waitwell, when he pretended to go for the papers ; and in the mean time Mrs. Marwood declared all to my lady.

Mrs. Fain. Was there no mention made of me in the letter ?—My mother does not suspect my being in the confederacy ? I fancy Marwood has not told her, though she has told my husband.

Foi. Yes, madam ; but my lady did not see that part : we stifled the letter before she read so far. Has that mischievous devil told Mr. Fainall of your ladyship, then ?

Mrs. Fain. Ay, all's out ; "my affair with Mirabell," every thing discovered. This is the last day of our living together, that's my comfort.

Foi. Indeed ! madam ; and so 'tis a comfort if you knew

all—he has been even with your ladyship ; which I could have told you long enough since, but I love to keep peace and quietness by my good will : I had rather bring friends together, than set them at distance. But Mrs. Marwood and he are nearer related than ever their parents thought for.

Mrs. Fain. Say'st thou so, Foible ? Canst thou prove this ?

Foi. I can take my oath of it, madam, so can Mrs. Mincing ; we have had many a fair word from Madam Marwood, to conceal something that passed in our chamber one evening, when we were at Hyde Park—and we were thought to have gone a walking : but we went up unawares—though we were sworn to secrecy too ; Madam Marwood took a book and swore us upon it : but it was but a book of poems —So long as it was not a bible-oath, we may break it with a safe conscience.

Mrs. Fain. This discovery is the most opportune thing I could wish—Now, Mincing !

MINCING enters.

Minc. My lady would speak with Mrs. Foible, mem. Mr. Mirabell is with her ; he has set your spouse at liberty, Mrs. Foible, and would have you hide yourself in my lady's closet, till my old lady's anger is abated. O, my old lady is in a perilous passion at something Mr. Fainall has said ; he swears, and my old lady cries. There's a fearful hurricane, I vow. He says, mem, how that he'll have my lady's fortune made over to him, or he'll be divorced.

Mrs. Fain. Does your lady or Mirabell know that ?

Minc. Yes, mem, they have sent me to see if Sir Wilful be sober, and to bring him to them. My lady is resolved to have him, I think, rather than lose such a vast sum as six thousand pounds. O, come Mrs. Foible, I hear my old lady.

Mrs. Fain. Foible, you must tell Mincing, that she must prepare to vouch when I call her.

Foi. Yes, yes, madam.

Minc. O yes, mem, I'll vouch any thing for your ladyship's service, be what it will.

[*Exeunt Foible and Mincing.*

Lady WISHFORT and Mrs. MARWOOD enter.

L. Wishb. O, my dear friend, how can I enumerate the benefits that I have received from your goodness? To you I owe the timely discovery of the false vows of Mirabell; to you I owe the detection of the impostor, Sir Rowland. And now you are become an intercessor with my son-in-law, to save the honour of my house, and compound for the frailties of my daughter. Well, friend, you are enough to reconcile me to the bad world, or else I would retire to deserts and solitudes, and feed harmless sheep by groves and purling streams. Dear Marwood, let us leave the world, and retire by ourselves, and be sheperdesses.

Mrs. Mar. Let us first dispatch the affair in hand, madam. We shall have leisure to think of retirement afterwards. Here is one who is concerned in the treaty.

L. Wishb. O, daughter, daughter, is it possible thou shouldst be my child, bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh, and as I may say, another me, and yet transgress the minute particle of severe virtue? Is it possible you should lean aside to iniquity, who have been cast in the direct mould of virtue?
"I have not only been a mould, but a pattern for you, and
"a model for you, after you were brought into the world."

Mrs. Fain. I do n't understand your ladyship.

L. Wishb. Not understand!—why, have you not been naught? have you not been sophisticated?—not understand! here I am

ruined to compound for your caprices, "and your cuckoldoms." I must part with my plate and my jewels, and ruin my niece, and all little enough—

Mrs. *Fain*. I am wronged and abused, and so are you. 'Tis a false accusation, "as false as hell," as false as your friend there, ay, or your friend's friend, my false husband.

Mrs. *Mar*. My friend, Mrs. Fainall? your husband my friend! What do you mean?

Mrs. *Fain*. I know what I mean, madam, and so do you; and so shall the world, at a time convenient.

Mrs. *Mar*. I am sorry to see you so passionate, madam. More temper would look more like innocence. But I have done. I am sorry my zeal to serve your ladyship and family should admit of misconstruction, or make me liable to affronts. You will pardon me, madam, if I meddle no more with an affair, in which I am personally concerned.

L. *Wish*. O, dear friend, I am so ashamed that you should meet with such returns;—you ought to ask pardon on your knees, ungrateful creature; she deserves more from you than all your life can accomplish—O, don't leave me destitute in this perplexity;—no, stick to me, my good genius.

Mrs. *Fain*. I tell you, madam, you're abused—Stick to you! ay, like a leach, to suck your best blood—she'll drop off when she's full. Madam, you sha'n't pawn a bodkin, nor part with a brass counter, in composition for me. I defy 'em all. Let them prove their aspersions: I know my own innocence, and dare stand a trial. [Exit.

L. *Wish*. Why, if she should be innocent, if she should be wronged after all, ha? I don't know what to think—and I promise you her education has been very unexceptionable—I may say it; for I chiefly made it my own care to initiate her very infancy in the rudiments of virtue, and to impress upon her tender years a young odium and aversion

to the very sight of men—ay, friend, she would ha' shrieked if she had but seen a man, till she was in her teens. As I'm a person 't is true—She was never suffered to play with a male-child, though but in coats; nay, her very babies were of the feminine gender.—O, she never looked a man in the face, but her own father, or the chaplain, and him we made a shift to put upon her for a woman, by the help of his long garments and his sleek face; till she was going in her fifteen.

Mrs. Mar. 'T was much she should be deceived so long.

L. Wisb. I warrant you, or she would never have borne to have been catechized by him; and have heard his long lectures against singing and dancing, and such debaucheries; and going to filthy plays, and profane music-meetings, where the lewd trebles squeak nothing but bawdy, and the basses roar blasphemy. O, she would have swooned at the sight or name of an obscene play-book—and can I think, after all this, that my daughter can be naught? What, a whore! and thought it excommunication to set her foot within the door of a play house. O, dear friend, I can't believe it. No, no; as she says, let him prove it, let him prove it.

Mrs. Mar. Prove it, madam? what, and have your name prostituted in a public court! yours and your daughter's reputation worried at the bar by a pack of bawling lawyers! to be ushered in with an O-yes of scandal; and have your case opened by an old fumbling letcher in a coaf, like a man-midwife, to bring your daughter's infamy to light; to be a theme for legal punsters and quibblers by the statute; and become a jest, against a rule of court, where there is no precedent for a jest in any record; not even in Dooms-day-book; to discompose the gravity of the bench, and provoke naughty interrogatories in more naughty law Latin; while the good judge, tickled with the proceeding, sim-

pers under a grey beard, and fidgets off and on his cushion, as if he had swallow'd cantharides, or sate upon cow-itc.

L. *Wish.* O, 'tis very hard!

Mrs. *Mar.* And then to have my young revellers of the temple take notes, like 'prentices at a conventicle; and after talk it over again in commons, or before drawers in an eating-house.

L. *Wish.* Worse and worse.

Mrs. *Mar.* Nay, this is nothing; if it would end here, 't were well. But it must, after this, be consign'd by the short-hand writers to the public press; and from thence be transferr'd into the hands, nay, into the throats and lungs of hawkers, with voices more licentious than the loud flounderman's; and this you must hear till you are stunn'd; nay, you must hear nothing else for some days.

L. *Wish.* O, 'tis insupportable! No, no, dear friend, make it up, make it up; ay, ay, I'll compound. I'll give up all, myself and my all, my niece and her all—any thing, every thing for composition.

Mrs. *Mar.* Nay, madam, I advise nothing; I only lay before you, as a friend, the inconveniencies which perhaps you have overseen. Here comes Mr. Fainall—if he will be satisfied to huddle up all in silence, I shall be glad. You must think I would rather congratulate than condole with you.

FAINALL enters.

L. *Wish.* Ay, ay, I do not doubt it, dear Marwood: no, no, I do not doubt it.

Fain. Well, madam; I have suffer'd myself to be overcome by the importunity of this lady, your friend; and am content you shall enjoy your own proper estate during life; on condition you oblige yourself never to marry, under such penalty as I think convenient.

L. Wish. Never to marry!

Fain. No more Sir Rowlands—the next imposture may not be so timely detected.

Mrs. Mar. That condition, I dare answer my lady will consent to, without difficulty ; she has already but too much experienced the perfidiousness of men. Besides, madam, when we retire to our pastoral solitude, we shall bid adieu to all other thoughts.

L. Wish. Ay, that's true ; “ but in case of necessity, as “ of health, or some such emergency—”

Fain. “ O, if you are prescrib'd marriage, you shall be “ considered ; I will only reserve to myself the power to “ choose for you. If your physic be wholesome, it matters “ not who is your apothecary.” Next, my wife shall settle on me the remainder of her fortune, not made over already ; and for her maintenance depend entirely on my discretion.

L. Wish. This is most inhumanly savage ; exceeding the barbarity of a Muscovite husband.

Fain. I learned it from his Czarish majesty's retinue in a winter evening's conference over brandy and pepper, amongst other secrets of matrimony and policy, as they are at present practised in the northern hemisphere. But this must be agreed unto, and that positively. Lastly, I will be endowed, in right of my wife, with that six thousand pounds, which is the moiety of Mrs. Millamant's fortune in your possession : and which she has forfeited (as will appear by the last will and testament of your deceased husband, Sir Jonathan Wishfort) by her disobedience in contracting herself against your consent or knowledge ; and by refusing the offered match with Sir Wilful Witwould, which you, like a careful aunt, had provided for her.

L. Wish. My nephew was *non compos* : and could not make his addresses.

Fain. I come to make demands—I'll hear no objections.

L. Wish. You will grant me time to consider?

Fain. Yes, while the instrument is drawing, to which you must set your hand till more sufficient deeds can be perfected, which I will take care shall be done with all possible speed. In the mean while I will go for the said instrument, and, till my return, you may balance this matter in your own discretion. [Exit.

L. Wish. This insolence is beyond all precedent, all parallel; must I be subject to this merciless villain?

Mrs. Mar. 'Tis severe indeed, madam, that you should smart for your daughter's failings.

L. Wish. 'T was against my consent that she married this barbarian; but she would have him, though her year was not out—Ah! her first husband, my son Languish, would not have carried it thus. Well, that was my choice, this is her's; she is match'd now with a witness—I shall be mad, dear friend; is there no comfort for me? Must I live to be confiscated at this rebel rate?—Here come two more of my Egyptian plagues too.

Mrs. MILLAMANT and Sir WILFUL enter.

Sir Wil. Aunt, your servant.

L. Wish. Out, caterpillar! call not me aunt; I know thee not.

Sir Wil. I confess I have been a little in disguise, as they say—'Sheart! and I'm sorry for't. What would you have? I hope I committed no offence, aunt—and if I did, I am willing to make satisfaction; and what can a man say fairer? If I have broke any thing, I'll pay for't, an it cost a pound; and so let that content for what's past, and make no more words.—For what's to come, to pleasure you, I'm willing

to marry my cousin. So pray let's all be friends ; she and I are agreed upon the matter before a witness.

L. *Wishb.* How's this, dear niece ? have I any comfort ? can this be true ?

Mill. I am content to be a sacrifice to your repose, madam ; and to convince you that I had no hand in the plot, as you were misinform'd. I have laid my commands on Mirabell to come in person, and be a witness that I give my hand to this flower of Knighthood ; and for the contract that passed between Mirabell and me, I have obliged him to make a resignation of it in your ladyship's presence—he is without, and waits your leave for admittance.

L. *Wishb.* Well, I'll swear I am something revived at this testimony of your obedience ; but I cannot admit that traitor—I fear I cannot fortify myself to support his appearance. He is as terrible to me as a Gorgon ; if I see him, I fear I shall turn to stone, and petrify incessantly.

Mill. If you disoblige him, he may resent your refusal, and insist upon the contract still. Then 'tis the last time he will be offensive to you.

L. *Wishb.* Are you sure it will be the last time ?—If I were sure of that—shall I never see him again ?

Mill. Sir Wilful, you and he are to travel together, are you not ?

Sir *Wil.* 'Sheart, the gentleman's a civil gentleman, aunt, let him come in ; why, we are sworn brothers and fellow travellers. We are to be Pylades and Orestes, he and I—He is to be my interpreter in foreign parts. He has been over-seas once already ; and with proviso that I marry my cousin, will cross 'em once again, only to bear me company.—'Sheart, I'll call him in—an I set on't once, he shall come in : and see who'll hinder him.

[Goes to the door and hems.]

Mrs. Mar. This is precious fooling, if it would pass; but I'll know the bottom of it.

L. Wish. O, dear Marwood, you are not going?

Mrs. Mar. Not far, madam; I'll return immediately.

[Exit.]

MIRABELL enters.

Sir Wil. Look up, man, I'll stand by you; 'sbud, an she do frown, she can't kill you;—besides—hark'e, she dare not frown desperately, because her face is none of her own; 'sheart, and she should, her forehead would wrinkle like the coat of a cream-cheese; but mum for that, fellow-traveller.

Mira. If a deep sense of the many injuries I have offered to so good a lady, with a sincere remorse, and a hearty contrition, can but obtain the least glance of compassion, I am too happy. Ah, madam, there was a time—but let it be forgotten—I confess I have deservedly forfeited the high place I once held, of sighing at your feet; nay, kill me not, by turning from me in disdain—I come not to plead for favour; nay, not for pardon; I am a suppliant only for pity—I am going where I never shall behold you more.

Sir Wil. How, fellow traveller!—you shall go by yourself then.

Mira. Let me be pitied first; and afterwards forgotten—I ask no more.

Sir Wil. By'r lady a very reasonable request, and will cost you nothing, aunt—Come, come, forgive and forget, aunt; why you must, an you are a Christian.

Mira. Consider, madam, in reality, you could not receive much prejudice; it was an innocent device;—though I confess it had a face of guiltiness; it was at most an artifice which love contrived—and errors which love produces

have ever been accounted venial. At least think it is punishment enough, that I have lost what in my heart I hold most dear ; that to your cruel indignation I have offered up this beauty, and with her my peace and quiet ; nay, all my hopes of future comfort.

Sir Wil. An he does not move me, would I may never be o' the quorum. An it were not as good a deed as to drink, to give her to him again—I would I might never take shipping. Aunt, if you don't forgive quickly, I shall melt, I can tell you that. My contract went no farther than a little mouth-glue, and that's hardly dry ; one doleful sigh more from my fellow traveller, and 'tis dissolved.

L. Wish. Well, nephew, upon your account—Ah, he has a false, insinuating tongue. Well, sir, I will stifle my just resentment, at my nephew's request—I will endeavour what I can to forget—but on proviso that you resign the contract with my niece immediately.

Mira. It is in writing, and with papers of concern ; but I have sent my servant for it, and will deliver it to you, with all acknowledgements for your transcendent goodness.

L. Wish. Oh, he has witchcraft in his eyes and tongue ; when I did not see him, I could have bribed a villain to his assassination ; but his appearance rakes the embers which have so long lain smother'd in my breast. [Aside.

FAINALL and Mrs. MARWOOD enter.

Fain. Your debate of deliberation, madam, is expired. Here is the instrument ; are you prepar'd to sign ?

L. Wish. If I were prepar'd, I am not empower'd. My niece exerts her lawful claim, having match'd herself, by my direction, to Sir Wilful.

Fain. That sham is too gross to pass on me—though 'tis imposed on you, madam.

Mill. Sir, I have given my consent.

Mira. And, sir, I have resign'd my pretensions.

Sir Wil. And, sir, I assert my right; and will maintain it in defiance of you, sir, and of your instrument. 'Sheart, an you talk of an instrument, sir, I have an old fox by my thigh shall hack your instrument of ram vellum to shreds, sir. It shall not be sufficient for a *mittimus*, or a taylor's measure; therefore withdraw your instrument, or, by'r lady, I shall draw mine.

L. Wish. Hold, nephew, hold.

Mill. Good Sir Wilful, respite your valour.

Fain. Indeed? are you provided of your guard, with your single beaf-eater there? But I am prepared for you; and insist upon my first proposal. You shall submit your own estate to my management, and absolutely make over my wife's to my sole use; as pursuant to the purport and tenor of this other covenant. I suppose, madam, your consent is not requisite in this case; nor, Mr. Mirabell, your resignation; nor, Sir Wilful, your right—You may draw your fox, if you please, sir, and make a bear-garden flourish somewhere else: for here it will not avail. This, my Lady Wishfort, must be subscribed, or your darling daughter's turn'd adrift, “like a leaky hulk,” to sink or swim, as she and the current of this “lewd” town can agree.

L. Wish. Is there no means, no remedy, to stop my ruin? Ungrateful wretch! Dost thou not owe thy being, thy subsistence, to my daughter's fortune?

Fain. I'll answer you when I have the rest of it in my possession.

Mira. But that you would not accept of a remedy from my hands—I own I have not deserved you should owe any obligation to me; or else perhaps I could advise—

L. Wish. O, what? what? to save me and my child from

ruin, from want, I'll forgive all that's past; nay, I'll consent to any thing to come, to be deliver'd from this tyranny.

Mira. Ay, madam; but that is too late, my reward is intercepted. You have disposed of her, who only could have made me a compensation for all my services;—but be it as it may, I'm resolved I'll serve you, you shall not be wrong'd in this savage manner.

L. Wish. How! dear Mr. Mirabell, can you be so generous at last! but it is not possible. Hark'e, I'll break my nephew's match; you shall have my niece yet, and all her fortune, if you can but save me from this imminent danger.

Mira. Will you? I take you at your word. I ask no more. I must have leave for two criminals to appear.

L. Wish. Ay, ay, any body, any body.

Mira. Foible is one, and a penitent.

Mrs. FAINALL, FOIBLE, and MINCING enter.

Mrs. Mar. O, my shame! [Mirabell and Lady Wishfort go to Mrs. Fainall and Foible.] These corrupt things are brought hither to expose me. [To Fainall.

Fain. If it must all come out, why let 'em know it, 'tis but the *Way of the World*. That shall not urge me to relinquish or abate one tittle of my terms; no, I will insist the more.

Foi. Yes indeed, madam, I'll take my bible-oath of it.

Minc. And so will I, mem.

L. Wish. O, Marwood, Marwood, art thou false! My friend deceive me! Hast thou been a wicked accomplice with that profligate man?

Mrs. Mar. Have you so much ingratitude and injustice, to give credit against your friend, to the aspersions of two such mercenary trulls?

Minc. Mercenary, mem! I scorn your words. 'Tis true

we found you and Mr. Fainall in the blue garret; by the same token, you swore us to secrecy upon Messalina's poems. Mercenary! No, if we would have been mercenary, we should have held our tongues; you would have bribed us sufficiently.

Fain. Go, you are an insignificant thing. Well, what are you the better for this? Is this Mr. Mirabell's expedient? I'll be put off no longer—You thing, that was a wife, shall smart for this. I will not leave thee wherewithal to hide thy shame: Your person shall be naked as your reputation.

Mrs. Fain. I despise you, and defy your malice—You have aspersed me wrongfully—I have proved your falsehood—Go, you and your treacherous—I will not name it, but starve together—Perish.

Fain. Not while you are worth a groat, indeed, my dear—Madam, I'll be fool'd no longer.

L. Wish. Ah, Mr. Mirabell, this is small comfort, the detection of this affair.

Mira. O, in good time—Your leave for the other offender and penitent to appear, madam.

WAITWELL enters with a box of writings.

L. Wish. O, Sir Rowland—Well, rascal.

Wait. What your ladyship pleases. I have brought the black box at last, madam.

Mira. Give it me. Madam, you remember your promise.

L. Wish. Ay, dear sir.

Mira. Where are the gentlemen?

Wait. At hand, sir, rubbing their eyes—just risen from sleep.

Fain. 'Sdeath! what's this to me? I'll not wait your private concerns.

PETULANT and WITWOULD enter.

Pet. How now? what's the matter? whose hand's out?

Wit. Hey-day! what, are you all together, like players at the end of the last act?

Mira. You may remember, gentlemen, I once requested your hands as witnesses to a certain parchment.

Wit. Ay I do, my hand I remember—Petulant set his mark.

Mira. You wrong him, his name is fairly written, as shall appear—You do not remember, gentlemen, any thing of what that parchment contained— [Undoing the box.]

Wit. No.

Pet. Not I. I writ, I read nothing.

Mira. Very well, now you shall know—Madam, your promise.

L. Wish. Ay, ay, sir, upon my honour.

Mira. Mr. Fainall, it is now time that you should know, that your lady, while she was at her own disposal, and before you had by your insinuations wheedled her out of a pretended settlement of the greatest part of her fortune—

Fain. Sir! pretended!

Mira. Yes, sir, I say, that this lady while a widow, having, it seems, received some cautions respecting your inconstancy and tyranny of temper, which from her own partial opinion and fondness of you she could never have suspected—She did, I say, by the wholesome advice of friends, and of sages learned in the laws of this land, deliver this same as her act and deed to me in trust, and to the uses within mentioned. You may read if you please—[Holding out the parchment.] though perhaps what is written on the back may serve your occasions.

Fain. Very likely, sir. What's here? " Damnation!"

[Reads.]

"*A deed of conveyance of the whole estate real of Arabella Languish, widow, in trust, to Edward Mirabell.'* Confusion!

Mira.' Even so, sir; 'tis *The Way of the World*, sir; of the widows of the world. I suppose this deed may bear an elder date than what you have obtained from your lady.

Fain. Perfidious fiend! then thus I'll be revenged—

[Offers to run at Mrs. Fainall.]

Sir Wil. Hold, sir; now you may make your bear-garden flourish somewhere else, sir.

Fain. Mirabell, you shall hear of this, sir, be sure you shall. Let me pass, oaf. [Exit.]

Mrs. Fain. Madam, you seem to stifle your resentment: you had better give it vent.

Mrs. Mar. Yes, it shall have vent—and to your confusion, or I'll perish in the attempt. [Exit.]

Lady WISHFORT, MILLAMANT, MIRABELL, Mrs. FAINALL, Sir WILFUL, PETULANT, WITOULD, FOIBLE, MINCING, and WAITWELL.

L. Wish. O, daughter, daughter! 'tis plain thou hast inherited thy mother's prudence.

Mrs. Fain. Thank Mr. Mirabell, a cautious friend, to whose advice all is owing.

L. Wish. Well, Mr. Mirabell, you have kept your promise—and I must perform mine.—First, I pardon for your sake Sir Rowland there and Foible.—The next thing is to break the matter to my nephew—and how to do that—

Mira. For that, madam, give yourself no trouble—let me have your consent—Sir Wilful is my friend; he has had compassion upon lovers, and generously engaged a volunteer

in this action, for our service ; and now designs to prosecute his travels.

Sir Wil. 'Sheart, aunt, I have no mind to marry. My cousin's a fine lady, and the gentleman loves her, and she loves him, and they deserve one another ; my resolution is to see foreign parts—I have set on 't—and when I'm set on 't, I must do 't. And if these two gentlemen would travel too, I think they may be spared.

Pet. For my part, I say little—I think things are best ; off or on.

Wait. I gad I understand nothing of the matter.—I'm in a maze yet, like a dog in a dancing-school.

L. Wish. Well, sir, take her, and with her all the joy I can give you.

Mill. Why does not the man take me ? Would you have me give myself to you over again ?

Mira. Ay, and over and over again ; [Kisses her hand.] I would have you as often as possibly I can. Well, Heaven grant I love you not too well, that's all my fear.

Sir Wil. 'Sheart, you 'll have time enough to toy after you 're married ; or if you will toy now, let us have a dance in the mean time ; that we who are not lovers, may have some other employment, besides looking on.

Mira. With all my heart, dear Sir Wilful. What shall we do for music ?

Foi. O, sir, some that were provided for Sir Rowland's entertainment are yet within call. [A dance.]

L. Wish. As I am a person I can hold out no longer—I have wasted my spirits so to day already, that I am ready to sink under the fatigue : and I cannot but have some fears upon me yet, that my son Fainall will pursue some desperate course.

Mira. Madam, disquiet not yourself on that account ; to

my knowledge his circumstances are such, he must of force comply. For my part, I will contribute all that in me lies to a re-union: in the mean time, madam, [To Mrs. Fainall.] let me before these witnesses, restore to you this deed of trust; it may be a means, well managed, to make you live easily together.

*From hence let those be warn'd, who mean to wed,
Lest mutual falsehood stain the bridal bed:
For each deceiver to his cost may find,
That marriage frauds too oft are paid in kind.*

[Exeunt omnes.

THE END.

EPILOGUE.

*AFTER our Epilogue this crowd dismisses,
I'm thinking how this play'll be pull'd to pieces.
But pray consider, ere you doom its fall,
How hard a thing 't would be to please you all.
There are some critics so with spleen diseas'd,
They scarcely come inclining to be pleas'd :
And sure he must have more than mortal skill,
Who pleases any one against his will.
Then, all bad poets we are sure are foes,
And how their number's swell'd, the town well knows ;
In shoals I've mark'd 'em judging in the pit ;
Though they're on no pretence for judgment fit,
But that they have been damn'd for want of wit.
Since when, they, by their own offences taught,
Set up for spies on plays, and finding fault.
Others there are whose malice we'd prevent ;
Such, who watch plays, with scurrilous intent,
To mark out who by characters are meant :
And though no perfect likeness they can trace ;
Yet each pretends to know the copy'd face.
These, with false glosses feed their own ill-nature,
And turn to libel what was meant a satire.
May such malicious fops this fortune find,
To think themselves alone the fools design'd :
If any are so arrogantly vain,
To think they singly can support a scene,
And furnish fool enough to entertain.*

*For well the learn'd and the judicious know,
That satire scorns to stoop so meanly low,
As any one abstracted fop to show.
For, as when painters form a matchless face,
They from each fair one catch some diff'rent grace ;
And shining features in one portrait blend,
To which no single beauty must pretend :
So poets oft do in one piece expose
Whole belles assemblees of coquets and beaux.*

7 JU 52

THE
SCHOOL FOR GUARDIANS.

A

COMEDY.

BY ARTHUR MURPHY, Esq.

AS PERFORMED AT

THE THEATRE-ROYAL, COVENT-GARDEN.



LONDON:

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1797.



PROLOGUE.

SPOKEN BY MISS ELLIOT.

*MAY I intrude upon your patience for a minute?
Ladies and gentlemen, before the opening of the play,
Just to excuse an accident, which, I hope, has no mischief in it.*

*I fain, if you'll permit, a word or two would say.
I hope you'll not be angry; but we've got no prologue for to-night;
And so I thought it was best to come and tell ye all the truth downright.
I went to Mr. Poet, and I spoke to him all I could;
But he said he had not leisure, though I know 'tis in his power, if he
would.*

*"A prologue, ma'am," says he!—"Yes, Sir, a prologue, if you please."
And then I did so intreat the man, and beg, and pray, and tease:
I told him, "You know, Sir, what a miserable plight we all are in,
To frown upon the performers, rubben pit, box, and gallery begin;
Whu—go the catcalls—dub—dub—dub—each dreadful critic's stick—
Prôlog'—throw him over — won't ye ha' some orange chips*

—Prôlogue—Cries o' London—Music!"

*All this and more I said; but he, determin'd still,
In formal fustian thus declar'd his will:*

*"Oft have I tried" [seems puzzled]—something about his style,
And how he felt the town's indulgent smile.*

*"Were I again to try my scanty vein,
I'd beg protection for the feeble strain.
But then to sue—he paus'd and rubb'd his head—
To sue—when fam'd Moliere the stage doth tread,*

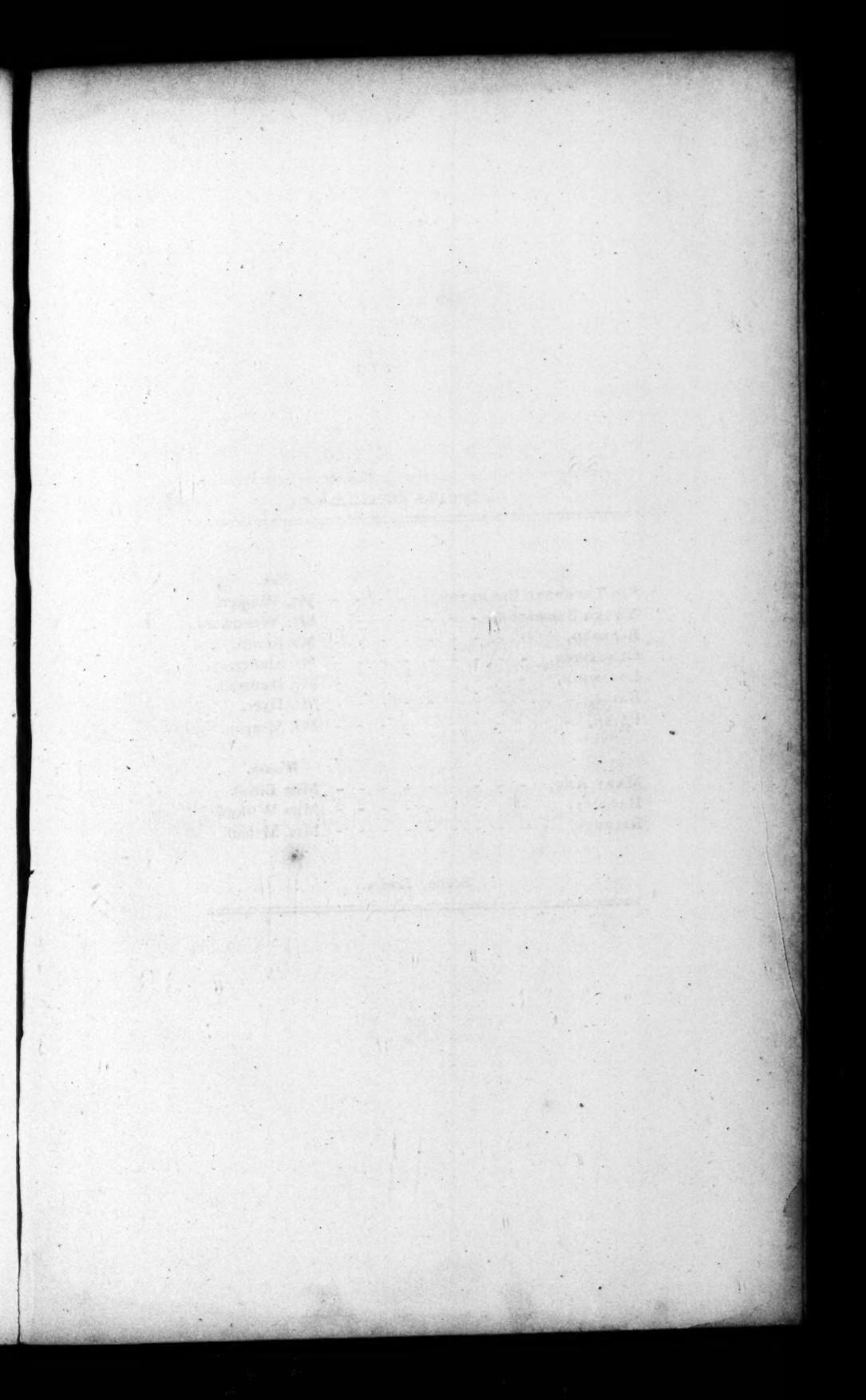
*Wore to profane the manes of the dead.
Moliere, of old, and still with rapture seen,
Was legislator of the comic scene.*

*To bid his Simple Girl assert the stage,
And, if she pleases, strive to mend the age:*

*This was my motive—this my only aim ;
Heedless of gain !—no candidate for fame !
An audience will weigh all in equal scales,
For justice, and not party, there prevails.”
Thus spoke Mr. Poet, and then with long steps march’d away ;
And now I am left alone to apologize for offering you this night’s play.
We’ll strive to make you laugh, if our aim be not perverted ;
Pray, how d’ye find yourselves ?—Are ye in good humour, and willing
to be diverted ?*

If you approve,

*The Rosciad Scribbler then no more I’ll dread,
Who points his malice at a woman’s head !
Who drop by drop his venom doth distil,
While Mother Dullness guides the bireling’s quill.
Lull’d in her lap, strange wonders he describes,
And Terence seems—a Frenchman to his eyes !
From thence he issues foul decrees on plays,
Adorns with scandal, and lampoons with praise.
One smile from you defeats the sland’rer’s aim ;
His calumny, like your applause, is fame.
From your applause our mimic glories rise ;
In pleasing you my whole ambition lies.*



Dramatis Personae.

Men.

SIR THEODORE BRUMPTON,	- - - - -	Mr. Walker.
YOUNG BRUMPTON,	- - - - -	Mr. Woodward
BELFORD,	- - - - -	Mr. Smith.
OLDCASTLE,	- - - - -	Mr. Shuter.
LOVIBOND,	- - - - -	Mr. Dunstall.
BRISK,	- - - - -	Mr. Dyer.
PETER,	- - - - -	Mr. Morgan.

Women.

MARY ANN,	- - - - -	Miss Elliot.
HARRIET,	- - - - -	Miss Wilford.
BRIDGET,	- - - - -	Mrs. Mahon.

Scene, London.

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Act III

SCHOOL FOR GUARDIANS.

Sc. 4



Graham del.

Stevens sc.

MR. BLAND as MARY ANN.

M.A. — So you be, comes I see.

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7 JU 52



THE

SCHOOL FOR GUARDIANS.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Enter Sir THEODORE and BRUMPTON.

Sir Theodore.

BUT I won't be told ; I won't reason about it ; I won't be answer'd ; I won't hear a word.

Brump. I have done, Sir—you have proved it to demonstration, by the same sort of logic that was used by one of the wits of Charles the 11d's time to his dog, when he was too lazy to beat him—“ I wish you well married, and settled in the country ! ”

Sir Theo. There again now ! don't enrage me ; I have some whimsical humours about me, that, let me tell you, Sir—and I can be very peremptory, if I please.—What ! when my neighbour Strickland and I have agreed the matter ! A young lady, with a fair fortune in hand, and seven hundred a year in expectancy—as pretty a reversion as any in Hampshire ! —and am I now to be told, “ She does not suit my taste—she is not handsome ? ” And so I am to be wasting my breath with you, about a complexion, a nose, and a lip !

Brump. If you would but leave those matters to me, Sir—

Sir Theo. But I tell you no; I won't leave those matters to you—Beauty is the last thing I desire to see in my family. Your mother, peace be to her! was as ugly a woman as you shall see on a summer's day: and what do you think I married her for?—For your good, Sir—for the good of my children.

Brump. And pray, Sir, which of you does this side-box face of mine take after?

Sir Theo. You shall take nothing after me, that you may depend upon, unless you prove obedient to my will and pleasure. I'll not leave you a foot of land.

Brump. I hope you will live to enjoy it yourself, Sir.—

Sir Theo. I'll give my fortune to found a new college, where it is not wanted—

Brump. I hope you'll live to enjoy it yourself, Sir.

Sir Theo. I'll cut you off with a shilling to buy you an halter.

Brump. I hope you'll live to enjoy it yourself, Sir.

Sir Theo. I hope I shall, though you say it with a sort of a dry look between jest and earnest. But don't talk to me of beauty again; I never knew any good come of it: beauty is like fine fruit, only fit to draw a parcel of flies about it.

Brump. And so I must set my teeth on edge with crab-tree apples—but where would be the harm, Sir, if, purely for the good of my family, I were to marry a lady of some share of beauty, only just to cross the strain a little, and settle a shape and a feature upon the issue of our marriage?

Sir Theo. Settle your wife's fortune upon 'em—Look ye, Sir;—my purse strings will never open: not a shilling of my money shall you touch, till you pay your respects to Miss Strickland. Now you know my resolution. What a graceless look there is!—ruin yourself if you will—follow your own courses, Sir.

[Exit.]

Brump. Your most obedient very humble servant, Sir—you may depend that I shall chuse for myself—Brisk! why don't you answer, sirrah! Why, Brisk!—

Enter BRISK.

Brump. We have been pretty handsomely lectured here this morning, Brisk!

Brisk. Yes, Sir, we have had wherewithal to edify by. I suppose, we shall lie at Tom Tilbury's, at Bagshot, tonight, Sir—

Brump. Where?

Brisk. Tom Tilbury's, Sir—only just to break the neck of our journey; for I suppose, now, you'll drop all thoughts of this other lady—I forget her name—Ay, Miss Mary Ann Richley—she has no chance now, I reckon, Sir—

Brump. Why, you senseless numskull!—as sure as I am Charles Brumpton, Esq. she shall be Mrs. Brumpton; and upon the death of my very good father she'll be a baronet's lady, that's all.

Brisk. And yet there is some truth in what Sir Theodore says: beauty is but a frail perishable sort of a commodity; and if you are disinherited for it, the lady's charms will not pay your poor servant, Brisk, his board wages. A feature, or a smile, can't go to market: a pawnbroker will lend nothing upon the tip of an ear; though indeed she may mortgage her person; but that, I take it, will be for her own advantage: we shall get nothing but a comely pair of horns by it, Sir, with submission.

Brump. Why you talk a frothy kind of nothing at a tolerable rate, Brisk.

Brisk. I have shewn you one side of the medal, now behold the reverse, Sir. When you marry an ugly woman, there is no great pleasure in beholding her; and to be sure,

when you look at her, you'll be apt to murmur to yourself: —for all purposes of joy one may cut as desirable an object out of an old tapestry-hanging: but then the woman has some valuable parchments, such as leases, bonds, and mortgages: and I, Sir, shall live in tolerable plight with you, which, to so good a master—

Brump. Leave prating, sirrah, and do as I ordered you. Put on your farmer's dress; go directly to the object I adore; let her know you are come from her guardian in the country, and have his orders to take her home under your care; convey her safe to my arms, and I shall reward you.

Brisk. But, Sir—

Brump. No arguing with me: about it, straight.

Brisk. You know how many blanketings and blows I have suffered in your service, Sir—

Brump. Sirrah, no words! Go and see who's at the door.

Brisk. You have marred many an excellent plot of mine, Sir. You know you cannot help meddling, when I undertake a scheme. If you'll promise me, Sir, not to—

Brump. Will you see who's at the door?

Brisk. I am gone, Sir.

[Exit.]

Brump. Ha! ha!—I shall most certainly carry her off. How Sir Theodore will be astonished, when he finds she is an heiress. Ha! ha!—it is the pleasantest adventure—

Enter BELFORD.

Bel. Brumpton, good-morrow!—always in spirits, I see.

Brump. My dear Belford, nothing depresses my spirits—though you thought they were too high last night, and were for letting me a little blood. Death, man! you make nothing of displaying an ell of sword-blade in defence of your mistress's top-knot!

Bel. Why you know I love too tenderly to bear the test of raillery: it is the infirmity of my temper; why would you put me to it?

Brum. And you that know my turn of mind, why would you be angry with me? I am happily a follower of the laughing philosopher.

Bel. Po! prithee, man, don't be such a coxcomb.

Brum. Prithee, don't you be so morose, so sour, so discontented a spirit. But, if, in your phrase, I am a coxcomb, with all my heart, i'faith: but take this along with you—what you mean as a term of reproach, I receive as a compliment to the materials nature has been pleased to compound in this happy frame of mine.

Bel. Po! po! running on at the old rate! If self-applause be philosophy, you have a comfortable share.

Brum. I have, Sir; and while my happiness is preserved by it, keep you the gravity and good sense, that make you too refined to be pleased, too wise to be merry, and too knowing to be contented. I am in a fair way to be successful, without any trouble at all; you are likely to be most scurvily disappointed, after a world of pains. A humble bow, which my dancing-master taught me, while I laughed at him; a fashionable coat, for which, if my taylor is ever paid, he will laugh at me; an intriguing snuff-box, and an apt valet de chambre—all these make love for me, and—

Bel. And you assume the merit of the conquest!

Brum. Oh! yes—when the trouble is over, I take the reward. Did you ever know a general officer, who, when the horse and the foot, and the right and left wing, have carried the day for him, did not claim to himself both the honour and the booty? But you make a toil of a pleasure. Love, which to me is a scene of delight, to you is a drudgery. Your temper grows as sour as a prude's, when the sermon

is long ; and as hot as a Welchman's, if you laugh at his pedigree ; or a profess'd sharper's, if you doubt his honour, after he has cogged the dice, and picked your pocket of your money.

Bel. Why, I own I am piqued, and naturally. If any friend of mine, out of mere spleen, speak detractingly of the person I admire, it were base infidelity in love not to defend her, when she is disparaged—my every thought is dedicated to her. Absent, I see her, hear her, and my imagination gloats for ever on her charms !

Brum^p. And you are so easily alarmed, that little difficulties are the Alps and Pyreneans in your way. Now my faith in these matters removes mountains. But indeed in all things we are opposite characters. If a tradesman brings you in a bill, and presses for payment, “ ‘Sdeath ! does the “ scoundrel doubt my honour ? does he mean to affront me ?’ ” Now I, when my father suffered me to be arrested, went cheerfully into confinement, and diverted myself for three weeks together with the bum-bailiff’s character. In the business of our softer passions, the same humour pursues us.— You write studied letters to your Dulcinea ; I am written to. You sigh ; I sing. You fret ; I am gay. You, upon a disappointment, “ Furies, death, and rage—there is no “ enduring this—life is grown a burden—damnation !”— I burst into a laugh, and what a whimsical world we live in —ha ! ha !—But come. I will hear your melancholy story. Well, the old dragon, I suppose, watches the Hesperian fruit !

Bel. He does, Sir : he keeps her locked up as a miser does his gold—not to be made use of till his death, and then to fall into hands that won’t know the value of it. It’s love’s last shift with me. She is inaccessible, and her guardian, old Lovibond, proposes to marry her himself.

Brump. And so, like the tyrant of old, intends to tack a living and dead body together!

Bel. Even so. My dear Brumpton, there should be an act of Parliament to hinder these old fellows from stopping the propagation of the species.

Brump. You are too hard upon 'em—they are seldom guilty of that mischief. I have known 'em have twins at a birth: that is, when some such coxcomb as myself gives them a helping hand; and then the old fellow cocks his hat upon it, and totters about so vigorously, wondering how the babes resemble him in every particular; whilst the mother knows, that she followed the example of the Greecian painter, and took a feature from every one of her acquaintance. If he prevents your marrying her, take your revenge that way.

Bel. Profanation! Her virtue, Sir! Besides, the world could never repair the loss. Her heart, I am sure, is mine. I used to visit there: but now no admittance. An evidence on the crown side, in a messenger's hands, is not better secured.

Brump. Now my business goes on without any trouble or difficulty. My old dragon is in the country, and has left his fair ward, the sweetest girl, my dear Belford—

Bel. You described her yesterday but few removes from a downright idiot.

Brump. Pardon me; she is simple indeed. But such a simplicity! It just serves to shew that injustice has been done her in her education; but in her every turn she gives such tokens of sensibility! She has beauty without knowing it; certain wild graces, rather than accomplishments; and talents, instead of sense!

Bel. Po! po!—a mere rustic beauty!

Brump. There now, derogating from her merit, and yet I

am calm ! The truth is, she has been brought up in the country, and wickedly kept in ignorance, that she might fall an easy prey to her guardian. But I have raised a spirit in her.

Bel. And how the devil did you gain access to her ?

Brump. I was going to tell you. Old Nestor's out of town, and has left her in the care of the two veriest simpletons that ever whistled for want of thought at a country fair. But gold, Sir, gold, that speaks all languages, and adapts itself to all capacities, has pleaded most eloquently for me. But come, I positively must leave you.

Bel. Nay, if it must be so —

Brump. My dear Belford, Cupid direct your arrows !

I see her every day, and all the day,

And every day is still but as the first,

So eager am I still to see her more.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A Street. Enter LOVIBOND and OLDCastle.

Lovi. And but this moment returned, Mr. Oldcastle ?

Old. Just this moment stepped out of the machine.

Lovi. Well, and now I suppose you have prudently laid aside all thoughts of matrimony ?

Old. Ha ! you are a comical man, brother Lovibond. I have taken my measures. To-morrow makes me a bridegroom ; and my fair ward, Miss Mary Ann, a bride.

Lovi. And a little time will make you —

Old. Happy : though, by that significant look, you have your doubts.

Lovi. I have, Sir : I have a shrewd guess that —

Old. Then you'll be out in your guess.

Lovi. I wish your horns a'n't out first.

Old. Well said, and without any apprehension for yourself. You are still determined to marry Mary Ann's sister Harriet, I suppose.

Lovi. That's quite another business: what I do, is no rule for your actions.

Old. It is, as I ever said: each man is still looking at the hump upon his neighbour's back, but never thinks of casting an eye over his own shoulder. I warrant me now you, in your grand climacteric, will tell me I am old.—

Lovi. Full ten years before me in the race of life.— Besides, you are an old batchelor, a stranger to the ways of wedlock. I am enured to the service. Your sister, Mr. Oldcastle, could have told you what a desperate good husband I was. But, lack-a-day! you begin late. Mercy on your forehead, say I! mercy on your forehead!

Old. Ha! ha! how blind some people are, when they have taken a thing into their heads! Ha! ha!

Lovi. Well! well! laugh on. But you that have been for ever a censor of your neighbours, for ever sneering and jibing at the married life—

Old. And a pleasant topic it is! Why matrimony affords a little comedy in every family one knows. But the education I have given Mary Ann—

Lovi. Is the worst in the world.

Old. The very best! I have trained her up in plain simplicity. Woman's wit teems with contrivances to disgrace her husband; yet you would educate Harriet in this profligate town!

Lovi. Ay, and I have taught her to know right from wrong.

Old. Right from wrong! You have ruined the girl.—

Have you not indulged her in every whimsy this fertile town affords?

Lovi. I have shewn her the world.

Old. Have not you carried her to plays?

Lovi. To see folly ridiculed.

Old. To profligate comedies?

Lovi. The stage is the school of virtue.

Old. The school of sin and impudence!

Lovi. Where vice undergoes the lash of satire——

Old. Where vice is made alluring, provoking!

Lovi. Where young ladies may learn——

Old. The use of dark closets, back-stairs, and ladders of rope!

Lovi. Where they may learn to put on the veil of modesty.

Old. To put on the breeches, and escape from their guardians!

Lovi. Where they are taught to respect grey-headed authority!

Old. To make a cuckold of authority! I know the ways of 'em all! Their cards, routs, operas, Soho-assemblies—all contrivances to excite curiosity, kindle desire, prompt inclination, and send 'em all dancing a jig to destruction!

Lovi. Common-place invective! Harriet will know how to avoid——

Old. She will know how to deceive you!

Lovi. She will have too much honour.

Old. She will have too much wit. Now Mary Ann has no wild notions, and of course no dangerous curiosity.

Lovi. Her curiosity is to come. She'll fall a prey to the first powder'd coxcomb that bows to her.

Old. Her simplicity will preserve her.

Lovi. But when the serpents of this town begin to whisper in her ear—

Old. They'll have no opportunity. She is snug in a little box of an house, which I have taken in the name of Mr. Biddulph. I have another lodging in my own name, where I do business. Nobody will see her; and when the nine day's wonder is over, I shall pack off to the country, and so escape from impertinence.

Lovi. Well! well! I can't but laugh at your system of education! ha! ha! Marry her if you will; and then, on account of your age and infirmities, you may do the business of your office by deputy—Ha! ha! a plan of simplicity!

Old. Brother Lovibond, a good day to you: I wish you success—Ha! ha! a town-education for a young girl!

[Exit.]

LOVIBOND alone.

Ha! ha! poor man, tottering to bed to a young wife!—I'll go home to my own Harriet.

[Enter BELFORD.]

Bel. 'Sdeath and confusion! my dull brain can devise nothing—hey! is not that old Argus Centoculi with all his eyes out!—Mr. Lovibond—a sight of you—what, have you been out of town?

Lovi. No, the builders are carrying the town out of town I think, and so, a body need not move out of London for country air—

Bel. How charmingly you look!

Lovi. What you call a green old age: I am not like the young rakes about this town, who decay in their prime, and are fourscore at five and twenty.

Bel. Ay! you have lived upon the interest of your constitution, and have not out-run the principal. I have had the honour of knocking at your door several times—

Lovi. [Aside.] I know it—

Bel. But nobody at home.

Lovi. [Aside.] I know that too.

Bel. I want to lose a little more money to you at back-gammon.

Lovi. I have left it off.

Bel. Well! well! I'll come and eat a bit of mutton with you. How stand you for to-day?

Lovi. What a hurry he is in! [Aside.] I have an unlucky engagement—

Bel. Well! I'll take a morsel of supper.

Lovi. Well pushed! [Aside.] I have left off suppers.

Bel. So best: I'll be with you at breakfast in the morning.

Lovi. I have taken to breakfasting at the coffee-house.—

One meets with very sensible people at the coffee house, and hears men praised for being out of place, and abused for being in place; and a huge deal of news, that's very entertaining in the morning; and all a damned lie in the evening.
Your servant.

Bel. But the fair Miss Harriet—how does she do?

Lovi. There he has touch'd the right string at last.—

[Aside.] I'll let her know how kind you are. [Going.]

Bel. Nay, don't fly so soon: I am to give you joy, I hear: you are to make Miss Harriet happy, I understand.

Lovi. Oh! no; they talk at random.

Bel. Yes, yes; come, you have taught her all her accomplishments, and are now to teach her the art of love—ha! ha! Mr. Lovibond.

Lovi. I profess no such thing.

[Going.]

Bel. Yes, yes, come—shall I dance at your wedding?—

You'll trust her with me in a country dance, and see that lovely bosom heave in sweet disorder, and rise as if it wooed your hand to touch it, ere it falls again.

Lovi. Ha! ha! you talk loosely.

Bel. Then when music wakens every gentler passion, and the sprightly romping has call'd forth all her bloom; then you'll lead her off, consenting, trembling, doubting, blushing!

Lovi. Ha! ha! ha!

Bel. Ha! ha!—come, I'll go and dine with you—"The world must be peopled, you know"—Ha! ha! ha!

[*Exeunt together, laughing.*

Enter OLDCASTLE.

Old. Well! well! let him be obstinate, if he will: I must step, and see how Mary Ann has fared these ten days, since I have been in the country. Let me see, what's o'clock?

Enter BRUMPTON.

Brump. How her old gaoler will look when he returns to town, and finds she has broke prison! I shall be deemed the very Machiavel of intrigue! Hey! is not that Mr. Oldcastle?

Old. Mr. Brumpton!—I rejoice to see you,

Brump. My dear friend, you are come in the very crisis of my fate, in that dear ecstatic moment, when to the natural vivacity of a gay, giddy temper like mine, ten thousand circumstances conspire to lift me to the upper regions of delight, which, together with the felicity of encountering the only man in the world, that—I must take breath—I am faint with bliss—it is too much.

Old. Ay! your fever is pretty high, I see—recover your

senses a little, and tell me at your leisure what is this mighty business.

Brump. Oh! business of such a nature—the Gods are now in council upon it—I expect Mercury every moment in the shape of my man Brisk, to let me know that the nectared sweets that dwell upon the lips of a certain lady, are intended for a wild unthinking coxcomb, as the world is pleased to call me.

Old. To be sure—you are in request among the ladies, no doubt. Now will he lie like an attorney's clerk. [Aside.] You are going to help some worthy gentleman to an heir to his estate, I warrant me.

Brump. I have done some service in that way: but the truth is, I am now going to help my father to a grandson.

Old. Going to be married!

Brump. This day may, perhaps, crown my joys! some certain fumblers at this end of the town, who were a little alarmed at the proportions of this leg, intended to light their windows upon it; the court of aldermen are preparing all demonstrations of joy; and their unhappy wives are going into deep mourning upon the occasion!

Old. The same confident fop he ever was! Well, and my friend Sir Theodore, what says he to all this?

Brump. You know his way; the same old crabbed humour—he has made a match for me elsewhere with one that—I would not deny the lady her merit--she preserves pickles well, and is a very notable keeper of accounts. The woman will do very well of a long winter's evening to say, Bless you, when you sneeze--but—

Old. She has a fortune, I presume.

Brump. Does not want acres.

Old. And you prefer one without any?

Brump. You mistake me! she's an heiress; it is not clear

that she is of age; but as soon as she comes to years of discretion—

Old. Then she may play the fool as fast as she will—

Brump. By chusing me, you think, she will give a specimen of her folly.—Ha! ha! I have pass'd many hours with her of late: she is beautiful as an angel—Now, my dear Sir, you can do me the most essential service—you have great influence over Sir Theodore! I dare not break this matter to him myself, but a word from you—

Old. And has she really an estate?

Brump. A very fine one—a large number of acres, and a coal-pit upon one of the manors,

Old. I profess I like your taste—ha! ha! The coal-pit whitens her skin, and she may hereafter wear a few of her own acres in each ear. I will see my old friend about this, and will positively promote your welfare. He shall agree to it, and—But how did you bring this about, pray?

Brump. An old way that I have—I came, saw, and conquered—I saw her at her window—such blooming sweetness! her eyes were through my heart at once—love inspired me with due courage.

Old. That was right—a bold stroke for a wife.

Brump. I drank tea with her the very next evening. I must indeed admit, that her understanding is not the most accomplished.

Old. So best,—never marry a wit.

Brump. She is at present rather in a state of ignorance; but from those blue eyes she occasionally darts such glances as bespeak a mind susceptible of the highest refinement.

Old. Where does she live?

Brump. In the very next street.

Old. What that street there?

Brump. Yes, that—under the care of the verriest muck-worm—

Old. He means me, I fear. [Aside.]—And her name, pray?

Brump. Miss Mary Ann Richley.

Old. Wounds! what a discovery here is! [Aside.]

Brump. Her guardian's name is Biddulph—perhaps you may know him.

Old. No, not I—the young rake-hell! [Aside.]

Brump. He means to abuse his trust, and confine youth and beauty within the arms of age and ugliness.—There's an old rogue for you!—Does not he deserve to be hanged?

Old. What a young villain! [Aside.]

Brump. I beg your pardon—I did not hear.

Old. I am seized with an ugly fit of coughing—[Coughs.] But you should consider—the marriage-act is very strict, and requires the consent of prudent people.

Brump. Po! that's nothing—abuse Scotland as they will, it enables us to evade the laws of England. My dear Mr. Oldcastle, you have promised me you'll speak to my father.

Old. Ay! I'll keep my word—he shall certainly know how you are going on—I'll do you that good turn, you may depend.

Brump. My dear good friend, it is so lucky that I met with you—

Old. I am heartily glad I met you, indeed!

Brump. Well now, adieu! Oh! but I forgot to tell you—she'll be mine this very day. Brisk, my fellow, who is a footman of talents, is to go to her as a tenant from the country, come to town with old Biddulph's commands to carry her down with him in the fly. She is so simple she will believe it; and the oafs about her will bite like gudgeons—and so—ha! ha!—I kindle into rapture!—I must fly to know the happy tidings—and so fare ye well—
you'll speak to my father.

Old. I'll do for you there.

Brump. A million of thanks to you—Ha! ha! Is not this a charming adventure?—Ha! ha!—Did you ever know so happy a rogue?

[*Exit.*]

Old. [Alone.] I never knew so abandoned a young profligate, nor so damn'd an adventure!—If the fellow is lurking about my doors, I'll swear a robbery against him—If I get sight of him, I'll describe him from head to foot, and swear he stole a horse in Northamptonshire—I have not a moment to lose—and then, my young madam, bag and baggage away into the country.

ACT II. SCENE I.

Enter BRUMPTON.

Ho! ho! ye powers of laughter, you will shake me to pieces one day or other!—Poor Brisk!—What a jade's trick madam Fortune has play'd him!—He writes me here—[*Going to read.*] All the poor devil's ill stars must have been combined against him!

Enter BELFORD.

Bel. Yes, all my ill stars are combined, sure enough! Oh! Brumpton! I have seen her guardian, that superannuated iniquity! but he defeats my happiness, and crosses all my schemes.

Brump. You were admirably employed, my dear Belford—Ha! ha!—“Cato's a proper person to entrust a love-tale with!”

Bel. Your mirth is unseasonable, Sir—

Brump. Nay, if you will run about like a great boy to catch old birds with chaff, when you ought to seize the young unshedged one in its nest—why, the consequence will

will be, that, like a blubbering boy, you'll come back with your finger in your eye, " I don't know what to do—I can't catch it—I can't—"

Bel. 'Sdeath! insulted thus!—draw, Sir——

Brump. Not I, truly—I am otherwise disposed.

Bel. Defend yourself, or I'll dispose of you.

Brump. Well! kill me, if you will—I'll die laughing, like Pierre in the tragedy.

Bel. Po! your meanness and your folly make you unworthy of my sword.

Brump. Ay! that's right—and now in due form, what has provoked you?

Bel. 'Sdeath, Sir! because your affairs are in a tolerable train, am I to be made your sport? Oh! you don't know what it is to be disappointed in the tenderest passion!

Brump. But I am disappointed, and in the tenderest passion too; and yet it was that very disappointment I was laughing at, and not my friend.

Bel. And are your purposes crossed too, my dear brother sufferer?

Brump. Ay! now I am unfortunate—Oh! the human mind!—Yes, Sir, I am disappointed—ha! ha!—Brisk is in a devil of a pickle! he went in disguise to carry off my little goddess for me—somebody that resembles him has committed a robbery in Northamptonshire—they have charged Brisk, and he writes me here, that they have carried him before Mr. Carbuncle, the wine-merchant, who deals out bad law and adulterated port to all St. Anne's parish. Brisk will be chronicled in miserable elegy, clubbed by two poets upon a flock bed in the Old Jewry;—the historians of Grub-street are already preparing " The Life and Conversation of Jeremy Brisk, who was born of honest parents"—Ha! ha! poor devil! I must go to his assistance. [Exit.]

SCENE II.

The Justice's House. Enter MITTIMUS and SQUEEZUM.

Mit. Here, bring the prisoner this way—a great pity, master Squeezum, that Mr. Carbuncle is not at home: this fellow will be carried to another shop, I fear.

Squeez. No, no; that shan't be—I have found another justice to sit for him—a gentleman who has been in the commission many years—he was going by in his chariot, but I stopped him. Here, bring in the prisoner.

Enter BRISK, dressed as a country fellow.

Brisk. Nay, good christian people—gentlemen—neighbours—I never was in Northamptonshire in my life—I am a poor, harmless, innocent fellow—I always had a mortal aversion to a cart—I never saw one in my days but it was better than a sermon to me—

Enter Sir THEODORE, with a letter in his hand.

Sir Theo. Well! well! I am not fond of acting, but rather than justice should be at a stand—the fellow answers the description—Sirrah, what can you say for yourself?

Brisk. Hi! hi! what shall I say?—your humble servant, Sir.

Sir Theo. Free and familiar! mind what you say; this is a serious business.

Brisk. Dear heart, Sir, does not your honour know me—your son's faithful and honest servant, Brisk?

Sir Theo. Brisk! what rogue's trick have you been playing, sirrah?

Brisk. Your honour knows, Sir, I have not been out of your house any time these six weeks past.

Sir Theo. And why in this disguise, sirrah?

Brisk. Nothing but a frolick, Sir: a mere freak of my young master's, Sir, and nothing more.

Sir Theo. Commit him for further examination. Rascal, I will know the whole.—Make out a warrant.

Brisk. Sir, Sir, I—you shall hear it all—the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

Sir Theo. Very well, and if you dare attempt to deceive—Clear the room, and leave us to ourselves. [*Exeunt all the rest.*] If you tell me a single falsehood—

Brisk. Not a tittle, Sir: the fact is, Sir, my master is in love desperately with a young lady from the country—he says she is an heiress, Sir; but I own I don't believe it—

Sir Theo. Go on.

Brisk. And, Sir, I was to go in this dress, and so to carry her off, and deliver her over to him—that's the short and the long of it, Sir, as I am a sinner.

Sir Theo. And as you value your ears, this is the truth?

Brisk. Oh! upon honour, Sir.

Sir Theo. Hark-ye, sirrah! you know the oak that stands near my house in the country.

Brisk. Perfectly well, Sir.

Sir Theo. It has been the reformer of manners twenty miles round the country.

Brisk. Ay, Sir, it has been felt with a vengeance.

Sir Theo. I have ordered a good cudgel to be lopped for me, and, if there is any deception in this, thy shoulders shall answer.

Brisk. Every word most religiously true.

Sir Theo. Very well! may be so—it has an air—I am glad I have found this out—the prodigal! the blockhead! You may go home, Sir; I can take upon me to discharge you from the suspicion you stand under here.

Brisk. Yes, Sir—and I shall ever—

Sir Theo. And if I ever detect you in any more plottings—if you are again the confederate of that absurd block-head—

Brisk. Transport me, Sir, if ever again. Well off, Brisk, well off!—

[Exit.]

Sir Theo. So—so—I have found out the young graceless, have I? mighty well! and if I don't exert the authority of a father—

SCENE II.

Lovibond's House. Enter HARRIET.

Har. To be locked up in this manner with an old rogue of a guardian!—Mr. Belford! Mr. Belford! why won't you be my deliverer? He knows I like him; I have told him so a thousand times; that is, my eyes have told him so: and yet he undertakes nothing! One would think the young men of this age have not hearts in their bosoms bigger than pin's heads! Ah! my dear protector! [Seeing Lovibond.]

Enter LOVIBOND.

Lovi. My blossom! my lovely little ward! to-morrow makes you the queen of my heart! and your will shall be a law to me.

Har. You only flatter me; you won't let yourself be ruled by me.

Lovi. I shall live under your absolute command, rose-bud! But you must be mild in authority, for you know—

Har. Yes, I know how tender you have been; your con-

fining me here so many days is to me a proof of the tenderest love!

Lovi. Yes, it is a mark of my affection.

Har. There are many reasons why I should not venture abroad—more than you dream of.

Lovi. You alarm me—what reasons?

Har. Why the danger is—no—you'll be for fighting the odious man.

Lovi. No; I'll not fight: I'll live for you.

Har. But will you follow my advice, and speak to him calmly, without passion?

Lovi. I will—let me hear—what's the matter?

Har. Why that Mr. Belford, whose visits you used to encourage—

Lovi. I have not liked him a good while—what of him?

Har. Oh! he's a wicked man: he has vile designs in his head, and would fain have me listen to his proposals.

Lovi. The impudence of the young men of this age!

Har. Your back is no sooner turned, than he raps at the door, and at the windows, and disgraces me with all the neighbours: my character will be ruined [*pretends to cry*] unless you find some method to—

Lovi. Don't be alarmed, my sweet—I'll bar my doors, and you shan't stir out this twelvemonth.

Har. That won't do.

Lovi. Then you shall never go out at all.

Har. That's some comfort: but in the mean time to have my reputation blasted by an abandoned libertine! [*She cries.*] “Cæsar's wife should not only be virtuous, but free from suspicion.”

Lovi. The sensible girl! this is owing to her education. Her sister Mary Ann could not make such a remark.

Har. Well! well! you don't love me.

Lovi. Yes, but I do: I'll go and swear the peace against him.

Har. I wish you would.

Lovi. I'll do it directly—I'll let him know, by a justice's warrant, that "Cæsar's wife is not to be trifled with."

Har. And pray tell him I hate him: that he may come as often as he will under my window, but it will be to no purpose, for I shall not endeavour to let him in.

Lovi. He shall hear it.

Har. Let him know, that though he is young and handsome, all his charms are lost upon me.

Lovi. I'll do it.

Har. Tell him you have been a father to me—that I consider you still as my father; and that I think it unnatural to love giddy young men, when I can be so much better off with you.

Lovi. He shall hear it on every side of his ears.

Har. Ay, but without loss of time, if you love me---I shan't be easy till he knows my mind.

Har. Yes, and tell him, if he should come when you are out, not all his winning ways shall prevail on me to run away with him.

Lovi. You have charmed me! transported me! ravished me! Get up stairs---I'll seek him this moment---ha! ha!---this all springs from her good sense---this is knowing right from wrong---ha! ha!

[Exit.]

Har. Be sure you tell him every word: and if Mr. Bedford does but understand every word, as I intend it, then I may still wing my flight to his dear arms!---a new scheme this of mine!---but love inspired it, and love may crown it with success.

[Exit.]

SCENE III.

Oldcastle's House. Enter PETER and BRIDGET.

Peter. Yes, yes, Bridget---the gentleman's generous enow, for a matter o' that.

Brid. And pray, Peter, do the London folk always give money to the like of we, as often as they come in or out of the house?

Peter. Ay! zure, and the sarving folk call it vails. Why, Bridget, poor servants would not be able to ape all their masters' follies, and powder like fine gentry, and curse and swear like lords, an so be every body did not give at street door more than any thing they get in the house is worth.

Brid. La! well that's pure, sure enow!

Peter. As to me, do ye zee, I does not care how often the gentleman comes, and for a matter o' that, I does not care how long master stays in the country.

Brid. These London ways are comical, that's for zure.—
[A rap at the door.] More grise to the mill—go and open the door, Peter.

Peter. Go yourself, an you go to that.

Brid. I shall budge none, not I.

Peter. Nor I, faith and troth!

[Another rap.]

Brid. La! how can you be so cross?

Peter. You put all upon me, that's your way—who's at the door?

Old. [Witbin.] Open the door, you varlets—open the door.

Brid. Oh! it's master—I'll go—

Peter. Master! then I'll go—

Brid. Stand out of the way, can't you?

Peter. Stand away yourself—I be ready—ben’t I!

Brid. Farther a field, will you?

Old. [Rapping.] Within there, open the door, I say—

Brid. Call here to Peter—he won’t let a body—

Peter. No body shall but I—[Opens the door.] Servant, master.

Enter OLDCASTLE.

Brid. Welcome home, master.

Old. Why am I to wait thus?

Brid. It was all his doings—

Peter. It was all her doings as well as I.

Old. Peace, numskulls! how is every body at home?

Peter. Charmingly well.

Brid. All in pure health, praise for every thing! and Miss Mary Ann sings about the house like a little bird in a cage.

Old. Has not she been melancholy since I went into the country?

Brid. No, Lord love her, not she!

Old. No!

[In a passion.

Brid. Yes!—how terrible he looks!

Old. Did not she long for my return?

Peter. Hugeously! so we did all.

Old. Vixen! jade! villain! rascal!

Peter. I’m down o’ my knees.

Brid. So be I—merciful father, how—

Old. You have obeyed my orders, have you?

That scoundrel that was lurking here about my house, he is sent to Newgate by this time. [Aside.

Brid. Don’t send I to Newgate, pray.

Peter. He’ll murder us both, as sure as a gun.

Old. What, you are a sneaking away, are you?
Oh! it's all too true—come back, or—

Brid. Yes, Sir—

Peter. No, Sir—

Old. Oh! Mary Ann! Mary Ann! I could never have imagined—call Mary Ann hither.

Both. Yes, Sir.

[They run out.]

Old. Now will they plot, and put their heads together.
Mary Ann! Mary Ann! Oh! here she comes.

Enter MARY ANN, playing with a cup and ball.

Marp. [Sings.] "Three children sliding on the ice"—so you be come, I see:

Old. Yes, I am come home.

Mary. Better late than never. I began to think as how you had forgot poor I. I expected you all the live long, long day—so I did; and there did not go a coach, or a cart, or an horse, or an ass, but I thought it was you. Ah! I am glad you're come. What's the matter? Ben't you well?

Old. Fatigued after my journey. You have been very well, I hope, since I left you—

Mary. Oh! yes, purely—neither sick nor sorry, not I.—By goles, that is not true neither; for last night—

Old. Last night!—What of last night?

Mary. Little Pompey barked so all night long I could not sleep a wink.

Old. Is that all? You have not been out any where, have you?

Mary. Out! La! where should I go? I don't like going out in this strange outlandish place. I like the country better by half.

Old. Well! well! you shall go back soon.

Mary. But then maynt I go and see sister Harriet first?—

An ill-natur'd thing, that's what she is!—She has not been to see poor I ever since I came to the great town.

Old. You shall see her.—So you passed your time very merrily?

Mary. Oh! never better in all my days. But you don't seem glad to see a body!

Old. Yes, yes; I am glad to see you. The little Jezebel won't tell me a word. [Aside.] Shall I tax her with it directly, or wait a little longer, to see her cunning? Let you and I go and chat a little together above stairs.

Mary. Ah! you look cross. With all my heart—I'll go. One, two, three, and away! [Exit.

Old. The little frippery! How she carries it off!—Oh! the devil! I burn—I'm in a fever! I have had the grass cut under my feet! Oh! the young Magdalen!—the sly iniquity!

[Exit.

SCENE IV.

The Street. Enter BELFORD.

Bel. Nature never design'd me for a knight errant. Don Quixote would have stormed fifty castles, while my dull brain is hatching one poor project. What must be done?

Enter LOVIBOND.

Lovi. Ay! ay! there he is, I see.

Bel. 'Sdeath! no way to convey a message to her!

Lovi. Full of mischief! Your servant, Sir.

Bel. Mr. Lovibond!

Lovi. I was in quest of you.

Bel. 'Tis a mark of your friendship.

Lovi. I mean to prove my friendship, do you see. I don't like to see young men losing their time. It is now fit you should understand yourself, and fix upon something that may settle your head a little.

Bel. Ah Sir ! 'tis in your power—

Lovi. Ay ! much is in my power. I have a fair ward, Mr. Belford—

Bel. He is going to propose her to me. [Aside.] I know her perfectly, Sir.

Lovi. Then I don't inform you of it. She is handsome, spirited, and sensible.

Bel. I am no stranger to her merit.

Lovi. Then I don't inform you of that neither. To-morrow I intend to gratify the wishes of her heart, and make her mine by marriage.

Bel. What so soon, Sir ? This is news.

Lovi. Then I inform you of it; and I will inform you of another thing too. She has a mortal aversion to you, and desires you will trouble her no more.

Bel. You amaze me, Sir ! The devil ! She has not blabbed to him, I hope ! [Aside.]

Lovi. What a mortified countenance he puts on !

Bel. This is all an absolute riddle, Mr. Lovibond.

Lovi. Then I'll unriddle it to you. She perceived you dangling after her in all public places, whenever I took her abroad with me. She understood those artful glances you cast towards her ; she could interpret every amorous sigh : she bid me tell you so.

Bel. She did ! Then perhaps I know how to interpret her meaning. [Aside.]

Lovi. She says, you may think her a melancholy prisoner ; but you may spare your walks up and down the street : and

so she would have acquainted you long ago, but she wanted a proper person to convey her sentiments to you.

Bel. She has found a trusty messenger at last.

Lovi. Ha! ha! so she has; she knows she could trust me. Ha! ha! I thought it a pity you should lose any more time, and so now you may go and bow, and kneel, and make a monkey of yourself before some other window.

Bel. Since it is so, Sir, I must submit. Her meaning is deeper than he is aware of. [Aside.]

Lovi. Don't be dishearten'd; you may succeed elsewhere. She allows you to be of a very comely figure, a well proportioned person; but 'tis all lost upon her. She considers me as her father, and has no unnatural passion for profligate youngsters.

Bel. I believe you, Sir. I desist from all pretension. I see this matter now in its true light; and, Sir, I shall molest you no more; and in that determination I take my leave.

Lovi. Not so fast. Another word. Though you were to watch your time, and in my absence scale the wall, and get in at the window, and entreat her to elope with you, she still would cleave to me.

Bel. That I dare say. I'll try her though. [Aside.] I am perfectly satisfied, Sir.

Lovi. And hark ye. You may come as often as you will about the house, she will not exchange a word with you out of the window; nor settle any scheme with you. Ha! ha! you see you are fully understood.

Bel. I shall ever esteem you as my friend, and I shall lose no more time; that you may tell the lady. She shall never have reason to upbraid me again; and so you may assure her.—Ten thousand blessing on her for this stratagem!—She shall be mine this very night. [Aside.] [Exit.]

Loui. What a look of chagrin there was! I have trained the girl up to this. Ha! ha! Mary Ann will never have sense enough to behave in this manner. Ha! ha! [Exit.

Enter BRUMPTON, and BRISK following.

Brisk. A pretty sort of jeopardy I have been in, master!

Brump. Traitor! let me see no more of you.

Brisk. And are those my thanks, Sir? You'll be so good as to give me a discharge.

Brump. I wish I could give you a discharge of a culverin.

Brisk. I am not so extravagant in my expectations as to desire that favour, Sir. Heaven help me! I am more easily contented. Only just a small arrear of wages, if you please, with a little dash of a character for diligence, fidelity, and a smattering of what you call parts; if my master did not mar all upon occasion, and leave me now and then in danger of dangling by the neck for attempting to serve him.

Brump. You are a villain!

Brisk. I am a fool.

Brump. Have you not betrayed me to Sir Theodore? let him into my whole secret? He knew nothing of my being in love in town here: but you must divulge it, and I must have him storming at me in a rage and fury: I must have my best concerted schemes disappointed by you! Begone, rascal, I have done with you!

Brisk. Mighty well, Sir! What possesses him? Only please, Sir, to settle that trifling balance—— [Exeunt.

Enter OLDCASTLE.

Old. It was well said by an old philosopher, “When you are in a passion, con over your alphabet.” I have done so, and have recovered my temper. Walk in, Mary Ann; walk in.

Enter MARY ANN.

Mary. Ah! you have not taken any notice of me since you came home. Ah! I see you don't love me.

Old. You are much mistaken. I love you exceedingly.—Draw a chair; sit down. Well! and how have you passed your time in my absence?

Mary. As well as any thing.

Old. Have you any news?

Mary. News! la, not I!—Fickins, I fib though. I have news to tell you.

Old. Have you? What is it, chicken?

Mary. Little kitten's dead!

Old. Indeed!

Mary. Ah! if you had seen all its pretty little tricks, and how it played about. It grieved me to lose she.—But squirrel's well.

Old. Is he?

Mary Yes, and so is mackaw.

Old. Ay, that's good news.

Mary. Yes, and I have marked three shirts, and hemmed five handkerchiefs.

Old. Mighty well! [Pauses, and looks at her earnestly.]—Mary Ann, this is a wide and dangerous world we live in: scandal, malice, and detraction, are ever flying about, constantly on the wing, and spreading pernicious tales to the ruin of every character.

Mary. You frighten a body, you talk so—

Old. Draw near, sweet—draw near! You look charmingly! Mind what I say. Some impudent neighbours have whispered, but I did not believe 'em: they have said, that while I was in the country, a young gentleman frequented

here, and was well received, Mary Ann. But I have laid a wager there was no foundation for any such idle givings out.

Mary. How much have you laid?

Old. Five pounds to four.

Mary. All that! Make a hedge of it, as you did at the horse race.

Old. Why so?

Mary. 'Cause you'll lose.

Old. Then there was a young gentleman here!

Mary. As sure as a gun! He was here for ever and for ever—morning, noon, and night.

Old. But my little lambkin, did I not forbid any visits? I won't be certain; but if my memory does not fail me—

Mary. Oh! for a matter o' that, you may be certain—you did forbid it, sure enough.

Old. And why was I disobeyed, my dear?

Mary. Ah! you would have done the same yourself, as the song says. [Sings awkwardly.

“ Had you been in my place,

“ Why you'd ha' done the same.”

Old. Very prettily sung! But explain, my sweet.

Mary. It is the surprisingest thing in the world. I'll tell you all about it.

Old. That's right; let us hear.

Mary. I was sitting in the balcony, thinking of no earthly thing, and he passed by on the other side of the way. Ah! he looked as handsome as an angel! And so he made me a low bow. I blushed up to my very ears; and so I got up, and made a low curtsey; and so he kissed his hand, and I could not help smiling at that: and so he bowed again and again, and I curtseyed again and again: and then he walked up the street, and down the street, and to and fro, and backwards and forwards: and, would you believe it? he did not miss a time making

me a bow, with all the good nature in the world ; and so I was as good-natured as he : and if he had staid all night long, I should have staid too ; for I thought it would not be right to be outdone in civility.

Old. Oh ! those damned balconies ! I always hated them. Well ! well ! go on, Mary Ann.

Mary. Well, and so the next day a large, comely, fat gentlewoman came to me ; and she had three or four band-boxes full of fine things ; and she said she had orders to give me my choice of charming lace, and charming ribbons. Ay ! and she seemed very good-natured, and spoke in the prettiest manner !

Old. Oh ! the execrable bawd ! [*Aside.*]

Mary. You are very pretty, my dear, says she ; but it's a pity you should be mewed up here : and then she offered me to take me home to her own house ; and said she would dizen me out with diamonds, and then a lord would fall in love with me.

Old. The infernal sorceress ! [*Aside.*]

Mary. And then she said I had done a great deal of mischief, and that I wounded a young gentleman terribly. Who, I wound any body, says I ? Yes, the gentleman I saw in the balcony. I was as sorry as any thing I had hurt him ; but I could not tell how it was ; and she said it was my eyes, and that he was shot through the heart, and would be dead and buried in two days time, if I did not see him.

Old. Oh ! the damned agent of hell ! [*Aside.*]

Mary. And then—could you think of her goodness ? indeed I can't help loving her for it—she offered me to go and meet the young gentleman at her house. I thanked her, and took it very kind ; but I did not care to go to strange places, and so I said the gentleman might come here if he would.

Old. Oh! the travelling milliner! [Aside.] Well, and did he come?

Mary. That he did, sure enough; and he said the very sight of me cured him of his wounds. Ah! I am sure you can't blame me; for I could not let him die—so I could not. I almost cried my eyes out when little kitten died.

Old. Brother Lovibond is right. She has it, I fear. Oh! I dread the rest. [Aside.]

Mary. Ah! but you are angry now?

Old. No—not angry. Well! how did he behave?

Mary. Ah! he had such a pretty smile! and he gave me this twee; and he gave Bridget and Peter whole handfuls of money.

Old. What did he say?

Mary. Oh! the prettiest words in the world.

Old. But did he not touch you?

Mary. By goles, I beg your pardon for that, but he did though

Old. I guessed so. [Aside.] Go on.

Mary. He kissed one a thousand and a thousand times.

Old. Daggers! daggers! daggers! [Aside.]

Mary. And squeezed my hand so tenderly!

Old. Poison! wormwood! wormwood! [Aside.]

Mary. He took one round the neck—

Old. I thought as much. [Aside.] Proceed.

Mary. And round the waist; and he—

Old. Now—now—it's all over! How I tremble!

Mary. What's the matter with you?

Old. Nothing. We shall have some rain. My corn shoots: that's all.

Mary. And he—[she smiles at him.]—Ah! but I won't tell you; you'll be angry.

Old. No—no—no. I love you dearly, Mary Ann; [Laughs]

uneasily.]—I do indeed. Go on with your story; go on.

Mary. Why then, he took my glove off, and almost eat my hand up with kisses.

Old. But was that all? Did you do nothing more to cure his wounds?

Mary. Look you there now! You are angry. Ought I to have done more?

Old. No; enough of all conscience. But, are you sure this was all?

Mary. He gave me this fan, and a pair of ear-rings; and I am sure it was very civil of him to shew so much good-nature to a stranger.

Old. Mary Ann, Mary Ann, all his smooth words, all his tenderness, all his smiles, were baits to entrap you, to ensnare, to deceive you, abuse you, ruin you.

Mary. Ah! but he told me to the contrary, over and over, and over again.

Old. I know the word, child. It was all for your destruction—to swallow you up in the jaws of ruin. Go up to your room;—all this shall be explained to you.

Mary. Ah! but you are out of humour with a body.

Old. Do as I bid you.

Mary. Yes, that's what I will. By goles, he's a sweet gentleman, for all you—that's what he is.—[aside.] [Exit.

OLDCASTLE alone.

What an escape have I had! and yet her ingenuous manner of confessing all, gives me some hopes. I'll read her a lecture, and then I'll go and let Sir Theodore Brumpton know what a villain his son is. Oh! Mary Ann, Mary Ann!

ACT III. SCENE I.

The Street. Enter Brisk.

My dear good nature, hold you your tongue ! You plead in vain :—not a step will I budge. [Striking his bosom.] I am rock, and will be made a dupe no more. Well said, my just resentment ! we know the world now, and will be led a devil's dance no longer. Bravo, Brisk ! now you are free, and your own man again. Service is a very unthankful office ; and for the mere honour of—Pshaw ! pox ! now my honour must be heard. What will the world say of you, Mr. Brisk ?—you that have hitherto been the first footman in England ! renowned for your parts and your abilities ! What ! give way now to a trifling difficulty ? Money is absolutely necessary for your master's affairs. Mr. Oldcastle is his only resource, and you have orders to apply for it directly. But, my dear honour, you know what an empty bubble you are, and how often I have been kicked in your service ! The more glory, man ! If any body thinks it worth his while to kick you, it's a sign you are rising in the world. Those are the true marks of a footman's genius ! those are the things that will raise you in the world, and make an exciseman of you at last ! Bravo ! I kindle at the thought ! I must go on ! One effort more, Brisk, and then ! But how ! how touch the cash ! “ My master is in the utmost distress, Sir, and will be for ever obliged to you.” Pshaw ! that will never do. I have a stratagem, and if I can but meet with master Oldcastle !—Ha ! as luck will have it—Courage, Brisk !—here he comes.

Enter OLDCASTLE.

Old. What a discovery have I made ! I'll let his father, I'll let Sir Theodore know—

Brisk. Oh! Sir! I am glad I have met you at last. I have sought you through the whole town.

Old. You live with young Brumpton, don't you?

Brisk. The same, Sir. Such a tide of affairs coming upon him—such an unforeseen accident!—Poor Sir Theodore, Sir! The good worthy gentleman, on his way from the country—

Old. I understood he was in town.

Brisk. He was coming to town, Sir; we expected him every hour: and now the fatal news is arrived. He was taken suddenly ill—too great a fulness of blood.—No assistance near. It happened on the road: no surgeon; no barber to bleed him; the poor gentleman expired; and in the most critical moment—

Old. Carried off in this manner, you say; and without having time to be ill?

Brisk. Yes, Sir, without a single consultation of physicians. It's very hard. It's a pity he was in such a haste to die. But good sometimes comes of evil, they say. 'The news has wrought a wonderful change in my young master. Sir Theodore had made a match for him in the country—a great match indeed!

Old. Ay! I heard of it.

Brisk. And yet the son, perverse and obstinate, was in love here in town; that is, he fancied he was, with an insignificant hussey, and was determined to marry her, in opposition to his poor father.

Old. I have heard of that too.

Brisk. But he is now shocked that he should be such a monster of disobedience; and he gives up all thoughts of this town lady.

Old. That's right: the good young man—

Brisk. Ay! the good young gentleman, indeed! He renounces her for ever, Sir; and is resolved to go off imme-

dately for the country ; and after he has performed the last duty to the best of men, who is now no more, he is determined to pay that regard to his memory which he refused to his authority, when living, and marry no woman in the world but the woman designed for him by his father.

Old. The good young man ! This is the best news I ever heard in my life. [Aside.] The good young man !

Brisk. But then his intention of going out of town, I fear, may be frustrated.

Old. As how ? that must not be.

Brisk. Why we were kept a little bare of cash latterly, just to reduce him to a sense of his duty ; and now he wants wherewithal to discharge some little bills, before we set out for the country.

Old. Why, I am indebted to Sir Theodore's estate. The intentions of the young man must not be frustrated.

Brisk. Heaven forbid !

Old. Here ! I have a purse here ! Ha ! ha ! I shall get rid of a plague and a torment. [Aside.] I can let him have a couple of hundreds ; [holds out the purse to him] and tell him he can't go out of town too soon. Good luck ! poor Sir Theodore !

Enter SIR THEODORE.

Sir Theo. My son bid me speak to him, and luckily here he is.

Old. [In amaze.] Ye powers of heaven ! Ye guardian Gods ! assist me ! help me !

Brisk. [In a mock tone.] Angels and ministers of grace ! what a damned accident is this ! Let us run away, Sir.

Sir Theo. Hey ! what's the matter ? What do the people stare at ?

Old. I am all over in a jelly ! [Drops the purse.] Brisk, support me, lend me your arm !

Brisk. I have not strength, but crawling on the ground. He'll carry away your purse. You know he always loved money. [*Brisk makes towards the purse.*

Sir Theo. Ha! ha! in the name of wonder, what possesses you?

Old. Disappear! for heaven's sake, disappear! I never did you wrong. I'll pay the money to your executor. I was advancing your son two hundred pounds in part of payment. I never saw a ghost in all my days before!

Sir Theo. What! do you think I'm dead, Mr. Oldcastle? Ha! ha!

Old. And be you alive?

Sir Theo. As sure as you are alive, man! Ha! ha!

Old. I took you for a ghost. [*Striking Brisk with his cane.*] Sirrah, let that money alone. Hold me, Sir Theodore, hold me; I am ready to sink into the earth. [*Goes up to him.*] They told me you was dead. That fellow, Brisk—Hey! what, are you running away with my money, scoundrel! villain! robber!

Brisk. May be you are used to ghosts, Sir:—I can't stay in a place that's haunted. [*Exit.*

Sir Theo. Compose yourself; and let me understand this business.

Old. [*Laying hold of him.*] I protest you are alive! That son of yours—he kills his father before he is dead—that abettor of his mischiefs! he told me you was carried off suddenly, and now my two hundred pounds are carried off suddenly.

Sir Theo. I am thunder-struck! I am as much amazed as you was this moment. You shock me, Mr. Oldcastle! Could my son engage in such a scene of wickedness?

Old. I am sorry to say it, but I fear he is a very wicked young man. They have imposed upon me; he has robbed

me. This money is got for the vilest purposes—to enable him to fly in your face, and carry off a little wench that is not worth a groat.

Sir Theo. Not worth a groat! and he had the assurance to refer me to you; said she had an estate, that there was a borough upon it; and that you knew all the particulars.

Old. Borough upon her estate! ha! ha! Yes, yes, I know the particulars. Lack-a-day, Sir Theodore! who do you think she is?—a milliner's 'prentice that has eloped from her mistress.

Sir Theo. My blood fires at him! I am out of all patience, Mr. Oldcastle. Thus my family is to be disgraced by a worthless, hair-brained blockhead! A milliner's 'prentice!

Old. Even so.

Sir Theo. The fool! the coxcomb! the——Here, I'll pay you back your money.

Old. No, you need not do that. Get it back from him: it will burn in his pocket. The sooner he leaves town the better. I shall be at ease, if I once hear he is gone.

Sir Theo. Mr. Oldcastle, you are very good to feel so much concern in this affair.

Old. Yes, I have a deep concern in it: but hark ye, Sir Theodore, don't let him know you had your information from me.

Sir Theo. No: you may depend upon me: not a syllable.

[*Exit.*]

Old. When he is gone, I shall sleep in peace. I said I would do him a good turn with his father. [Exit.]

SCENE II.

Lovibond's House. Enter HARRIET.

Har. How my heart beats!—Post haste—gallop—gallop! and no wonder. It's a dangerous experiment I have tried. Could I but convey this letter! Mr. Belford then would know my meaning. Hush! here comes my turnkey!

Enter LOVIBOND.

Lovi. Well, Harriet, I have executed your commission.

Har. How did he receive it?

Lovi. He was very much mortified, though I thought I marked, as he went off, an odd sort of a dry constrained smile.

Har. But I shall have no more reason to complain of him, I hope?

Lovi. Ha! ha! I almost pitied the poor devil.

Har. He deserves no pity, Mr. Lovibond; he is a sad wretch.

Lovi. I believe it: but he knows he was engaged in a vain pursuit; he said so himself, and bid me assure you he would lose no more time.

Har. That revives me—

Lovi. No, no, he will hardly come this way again.

Har. I don't know what to say to that. I dread the contrary. I am afraid he will not renounce me for ever so easily as you may imagine.

Lovi. And, pray, what reasons have you for thinking so?

Har. I have terrible proofs against him;—while you was out he came again under my window.

Lovi. Ay?

Har. I ran away at the sight of him; but the window being open, he flung this little box into the room with a letter in it.

Lovi. A letter in it!—

Har. Yes, the wicked contriver! a letter in it! I ran to the window to throw it to him again, but he was gone; and then it occurred to me that it might not be quite so prudent to throw it into the street, lest it should fall into the hands of malicious people, who might misinterpret appearances to my disadvantage.

Lovi. That was wisely judged.

Har. I have been ever since thinking that it ought to be returned, and if I had a proper person—

Lovi. Who so proper as myself? let me have it.

Har. No, no, it would affront him more if delivered by a common porter.

Lovi. Excuse me, I am the fittest person—a letter in a box! what contrivances they have! I'll take care he shall have it, and he will look so silly when he perceives all his schemes are blasted.

Har. Why indeed, it will astonish him the more if you deliver it.

Lovi. So it will, ha! ha! it will be a rare stroke of revenge!—ha! ha!

Har. [She laughs.] The newest that ever was.

Lovi. I like it of all things; but first let me see the contents of this letter—

Har. Dear heart, not for the world! would you give the horrid man room to imagine, that a girl of character would so much as open the seal of his filthy letter? Let me advise, Mr. Lovibond:—to return it unopened will be the strongest

mark of contempt, and the greatest affront that can be put upon him.

Lovi. There is something in that—your wisdom charms me—you endear yourself to me more and more every hour—

Har. You'll use your own discretion whether to open it or not—but the reasons I have given—

Lovi. Are to me conclusive. I'll about this business directly—ha! ha!—we'll put the greatest affront in the world upon him—ha! ha!—the truest mark of contempt—ha! ha! Good-bye, rose-bud, good-bye. [Exit.]

Har. Yes, yes, let him have it unopened—if this plot takes, I shall have my utmost wish—and making him my convenient, my go-between in the business, gives life and spirit to the plot—I'll outwit him if I can. [Exit.]

SCENE III.

Sir Theodore's House. Enter BRUMPTON and BRISK.

Brump. Admirably managed, Brisk! now I have the si-
news of war— [Tossing up a purse.]

Brisk. It was got out of the fire, I promise you, Sir—

Brump. Your services are of higher value for it.

Brisk. And yet I fear my services may one day or other bring me to—What do you think your father will say to me?

Brump. Po! absurd—Mr. Oldcastle will talk matters over with him. I desired my father to make it his business to see my friend Oldcastle.

Brisk. You desired him to do that, did you?

Brump. Yes, I desired him.

Brisk. And his coming was owing to you?

Brump. Yes, yes ; ha ! ha ! it was I occasioned that—I desired him to go.

Brisk. Then pray desire any body else but Brisk to go on your errands for the future.—More misfortunes ! here comes Sir Theodore ; settle it as well as you can with him, I wash my hands of it, and now legs do your office. [Runs off.]

Enter Sir THEODORE.

Sir Thea. So, Sir ! [Pauses and looks at him.] Thou graceless ! thou ungrateful ! —

Brump. What's in the wind now ?

[Aside.]

Sir Theo. Easy, calm, unfeeling prodigal !

Brump. Sir, these are words that—

Sir Theo. That you deserve, and worse, if indignation did not choak them here—Look ye, Sir, I spared no pains in your education ; expence, indulgence, care, affection, all that a fond father could bestow, were your's. I hoped to see you a young man of principle, governed by sentiments of honour, a credit and a comfort to me ; but what a sad reverse of all this ! Your reputation gone, your character blasted, and vile expedients every day made use of !

Brump. Upon my word, Sir, this bitterness of reproach, how have I deserved ?

Sir Theo. How deserved ! [Pauses and looks at him.] And dare you ask the question ? Refund that money, Sir—the two hundred pounds, out of which you have gulled an easy worthy friend of mine ; restore it this moment, or perhaps it may be the last you will ever handle.

Brump. And where is the mighty harm, Sir ?

Sir Theo. I have no patience with you, I have lived too long for you, have I ? The sand lingers in the glass, and you want to shake it out ! return that money this instant, or never look me in the face again.

Brum. If it must be so, Sir—but if you'll please to hear me—
Sir Theo. Po! po! I have full conviction—for the meanest purposes too this stratagem was contrived!—to run counter to my will, and carry off a little obscure girl, and so live despised, a scandal to your father, and a laughing-stock to all your acquaintance: go, and reform, set out for the country directly, or never darken my doors again! [Exit.]

Brum. What the devil can I make of all this! I am certainly out of luck to-day. It does not signify. I'll pursue Mary Ann with more spirit than ever, I'll to her house this moment: since difficulties come in my way, genius must surmount them, that's all. [Exit.]

SCENE IV.

Oldecastle's House. Enter OLDCastle and MARY ANN.

Mary. A mortal sin!

Old. Yes, a mortal sin! you are unexperienced in these matters. It is a sin, child, to accept of presents from men, twees, fans, and Brussels lace. Brussels lace has done as much mischief as the forbidden fruit—I wish I had bred her up a quaker—[Aside]—Mind my words—to indulge wanton young men in liberties with your person, to let 'em fold you round the waist, play with your neck, and print lascivious kisses on your lips—'tis the sure road to destruction, 'tis horrible, Mary Ann, horrible and abominable!

Mary. Ah! but I don't believe that, and a pity it should, for [smiling at him] it's very agreeable. I am sure I like it better than questions and commands, or the fool in the middle, or hide and go seek either.

Old. I tell you they are all abominable things till the marriage-ceremony is performed.

Mary. And is it allowed then?

Old. Then, and then only, Mary Ann.

Mary. [Smiling] By goles, I am glad to hear that—and so marry me as soon as you will, I shall be pure and happy with him then—

Old. With whom?

Mary. Why, with that sweet, charming, young—Ah! look you there—

Old. Hold, beware, Mary Ann; I marry you for myself only, you must despise and hate all others.

Mary. Ah! I never shall find it in my heart to hate him.

Old. It will be the destruction of you even to think of him. Look you, child; mark well my admonitions. [Sits down.] Come hither, hold up your head, child; listen attentively. [He raises her head.] I take you to my bed, Mary Ann, my true and lawful wife; but take heed—for but now you was tumbling headlong down the gulph of perdition.

Mary. I wish you would let me go and feed my birds.

Old. Compose your thoughts, I say. Marriage is an holy institution, and exacts rigorous duties on the part of the wife—you must love, honour, and obey your husband; therefore be upon your guard—the enemy of womankind is for ever prowling about in quest of prey, always ready to seduce, to murder, and devour, and swallow up in the jaws of ruin every frail young creature that comes in his way.

Mary. [Bursts into tears.] But they shan't swallow me up, so they shan't!

Old. Ay! ay! this will do her good—Come, come, dry up your tears.

Mary. [Sobbing.] I did not do any thing to be run away with in the jaws of ruin, so I did not!

Old. No, no, all will be well—'tis for your good I speak—so—so—so—have done crying—I know you'll be good—there—make me a curtsy—mighty well! be a good girl—

Mary. Ah! but they shan't murder and devour me, for there are folks enough in London, all hours of the day, to assist a body; and if he comes in the night, I can call the watch, so I can——

Old. I am pleas'd with her simplicity. This young profligate that you have let into my house, if he should come under your window again—that's right, I have a thought—you shall fling him out all his presents, you shall write him a letter, and tell him what a monster he is.—Come, take that chair, sit down—take that pen, and write as I dictate to you——

Mary. [Sitting down.] La! I does not understand all this——

Old. [Walking about.] Write as I dictate. Come, begin—Mr. Brumpton—[Goes to the side of the scene.] Peter, bring me up a candle——

Mary. "Dear Mr. Brumpton!"——

Old. Mr. Brumpton, and no more——

Mary. [Smiling aside.] Very well——

Old. [Walking about.] "You are a vile man, and your visits, I now see, sprung from a bad design"——

Mary. [Aside.] Ah! I don't like those words. By goles [Smiling as his back is turned] I know what I'll do. [Stifling a laugh.] I have wrote it——

Old. "To ruin my future happiness."——

Mary. Happiness——

Old. "Your intention is base, and unworthy of a gentleman"——

Mary. Very well——

Old. "You are odious in your person, detestable in your morals, and the scorn of all our sex."—Have you wrote it?

Mary. Stay, stay, then—all our sex——

Old. "I am in love with Mr. Biddulph."

Mary. Who?

Old. Write as I bid you. "I am in love with Mr. Bid-dulph, a worthy, good gentleman, and out of his hands it never shall be in your power to seduce me."

Mary. [Smiling.] Very well—

Old. "Therefore let me never see you any more—Mary Ann Richley."

Mary. Mary Ann Richley—

Old. Now let me read it—

Mary. Ah! stay, stay a moment, not quite done.

Enter PETER.

Peter. Here be the candle, master—the gentleman is walking under the window now—

Old. Is he? make haste, fold up the letter—let me do it, let me do it—make haste—come, come, dispatch, he'll be gone, else—you shall throw it to him now, and all his presents—come, come, make haste!

Mary. Ah! I am ready: I like this of all things.

[*Exeunt in a violent hurry.*

SCENE V.

The Street. Enter BELFORD and LOVIBOND.

Lovi. Once more well met, Sir. You can write, I fancy, can't you?

Bel. The drift of that question, Sir?

Lovi. I fancy you know this little bauble [*Shewing a box.*] You don't know it, to be sure—no, nor the letter in the inside; here, take it back; I charge nothing for the postage, you have it unopened, *in statu quo* [*opens the box.*] Look ye here; ha! no direction upon it—that was cunning

—here, here, you have it in good order, and well conditioned as it came—ha! ha! Harriet will not read a word of it; she had no curiosity about it.

Bel. But I have [Aside, and, taking the letter, opens it.]
heavens bless her wit! [Aside, and reads.]

Lovi. Ay! You know the hand-writing. Take notice you broke the seal yourself: none of us read a word of it, we return it unopened, to make the affront the deeper.

Old. I believe you, Sir; I see you never read a word of it.

Lovi. Not a syllable, her pride would not suffer it.

Bel. Well, since it is come to this, being out of humour will avail nothing. Ha! ha! I can't help laughing.

Lovi. That's pleasant of you—ha! ha! ha!

Bel. Yes, very pleasant—ha! ha! ha!

Lovi. See what your intrigues are come to.

Bel. Yes, Sir, you have brought 'em to a fine pass.

Lovi. Ay! you see I am not to be tricked.

Enter OLDCASTLE.

Old. Mr. Lovibond, I am wild with joy.

Lovi. And so am I.

Bel. Who is that old fellow? [Aside, and reads his letter.]

Old. I have managed matters charmingly. Who is that spark?

Lovi. You need not be shy of him. I'll venture to say you have not managed as well as I have, Mr. Old—

Old. Call me Biddulph. [Apart.]

Lovi. Well! I fancy you will toss no more letters in at the window.

Bel. No truly, Sir, not I; and I beg you will assure the lady that—

Lovi. Ay! let us hear; you need not mind this gentleman—come, come, let us hear—now brother Old—

Old. Call me Biddulph——

[*Apart.*]

Lovi. Ay! now hear him, Mr. Biddulph.

Bel. I beg the lady's pardon, Sir——I resign myself to her inclinations, and shall obey her commands——

Lovi. Very well.

Bel. You are too powerful a rival, and since it is so, you will be pleased to tell her I most heartily approve of the choice she has made.

Lovi. Do you hear that?

[*To Oldcastle.*]

Bel. Her superior sense shines forth in every action of her life; and, Sir, I will only add that I shall never give her cause to complain again—you will report me to the lady, and, Sir, I take my leave.

[*Exit.*]

Old. There, there, you see what a happy man I am——

Old. Well, and now let me tell you——

Lovi. I can't stay to hear——I am in the elements with joy! —brother Oldcastle, your servant.

[*Exit.*]

Old. But, brother Lovibond, let me tell you—po! an envious man, he can't bear a neighbour's happiness—lack-a-day! I wish he had staid, for here comes that graceless young——

Enter BRUMPTON, bumbling a tune.

Old. Well, Mr. Brumpton—the young dog, nothing affects him. [*Aside.*]—Well, and your intrigues, how go they on?

Brump. Oh! I longed to see you: you have not been able to reconcile my father, I find.

Old. No; I did all I could. I spoke very handsomely of you to Sir Theodore, I assure you.

Brump. And yet he is worse than ever?

Bel. He is very positive—well! but the business of your love——

Brump. Why, it was likely to be somewhat embarrassed—

Old. I long to hear it. [Aside.] As how, pray?

Brump. The old curmudgeon is returned from the country—

Old. Ay!

Brump. The servants have changed their tone, and the door is shut in my face.

Old. I cannot help laughing—ha! ha! this Mr. Bidulph knows what he is about, I fancy—

Brump. Po!—the fellow is fitter to have the funeral service read over him than the marriage-ceremony—he made her come to the balcony—

Old. Well! and how was that?

Brump. He muffled himself up behind the curtain—I could not distinguish him—she threw me out some trinkets I had given her—But, my dear friend, she flung a letter with 'em.

Old. I long to hear about that.

Brump. The contents of it amazed me!

Old. I dare say—she told your her mind, I reckon.

Brump. Most freely, most openly—ha! ha! old Nostrodamus is outwitted—for, look you here—here in her own fair hand—ten thousand blessings on her! [kisses the letter]—here, Sir, the genuine dictates of her heart—

Old. He is mad, sure!—let me see it.

Brump. [reads.] “ Dear Mr. Brumpton, you are a charming man, and your civilities, I am sure, sprung from an honest design for my future happiness.”

Old. In the name of wonder, what is all this! [Aside.]

Brump. [reads.] “ Your intentions are generous, and worthy of a gentleman”—

Old. The little hypocritical sorceress! [Aside.]

Brump. [reads.] “ You are handsome in your person, and your manners also; and the admiration of all our sex”—

Old. Oh! the Jezebel!

[*Aside.*]

Brump. [reads.] "I hate Mr. Biddulph, an odious old
"wretch; and"—

Old. The vile harlotry!

[*Aside.*]

Brump. [reads.] "And out of my guardian's hands it is
"in your power to relieve me. Your's, indeed and indeed,
"until death us do part—Mary Ann Richley."

Old. She has reversed every word of it!

Brump. There's an adventure! ha! ha! ha! is not she a
charming girl? you don't partake of my joy!

Old. Partake of your joy—I—I—I—yes. [*Looking uneasy.*]

Brump. What a way old Biddulph will be in!—

Old. Why, I must say I feel for him—

Brump. Feel for him! a wretch like that! so ungenerous a
guardian—so base a betrayer of his trust! who could offer
his withered superannuated love to the sweetest girl, and
with the winter of old age nip so much beauty in its bud!—
January and May joined together! does not that make you
laugh?

Old. I am afraid of laughing, though I love it of all things:
it sets me a coughing always—well! but trouble may come
of all this—

Brump. Never be uneasy—an't you amazed at my success?

Old. I am, indeed—I never was so confounded in all my
days. [*Aside.*] I wish as heartily as a minister of state, that
there was not such a thing as pen, ink, and paper in the
kingdom. [*Aside.*]

Brump. What's the matter with you?

Old. A megrim has suddenly taken me—take care what
you do—Mr. Oldcastle, you are a blockhead, an overweening,
cuckoldy blockhead! [*Aside.*]—I wish your father
mayn't hear of this—Oh! the vile baggage! I must run
home directly—

[*Exit.*]

Brump. How indifferent the old muckworm is grown ! but this dear, enchanting letter !—Oh ! this joy is too powerful ! —Sir Theodore never made this leg—ha ! ha !

Enter BELFORD.

Bel. Brumpton, are you in good humour ? May I venture to—

Brump. Belford, let me embrace you—I tread in air.

[Embracing him.]

Bel. My dear Brumpton, I too am wild with joy. I am out of my senses. [Walks about, buming a tune.]

Brump. [Hums a different tune.] Oh ! such an unexpected, transporting, ravishing event !

Bel. Such a surprise, above all romance !

Brump. Oh ! Belford, I am the happiest rogue—

Bel. Such unutterable bliss, my dear boy !

Brump. Her wit is equal to her beauty !

Bel. The greatest stroke of invention—Ha ! ha !

Brump. Such a sweet epistle !

Bel. So divine a letter—and the old fellow brought it himself !

Brump. No, no, you mistake ; she flung it out of the window.

Bel. Po ! I tell you he was the bearer of it himself.

Brump. You are quite wrong ; she was in the balcony, and—

Bel. Pshaw ! give me leave to know : did not I see him ?

Brump. There was no seeing him distinctly ; he was skulking behind the curtain, and then she threw the letter down to me : Oh ! the idol of my heart ! the lovely Mary Ann !—

Bel. Mary Ann !—you are the most perplexing—'Sdeath ! I

was telling you how my sweet goddess contrived to send me a letter by her very guardian—

Brump. I did not hear a syllable of that matter : I was telling you—

Bel. Then I'll tell you how it was—

Brump. No, no ; hear the story of my happiness.

Bel. Nay, nay ; mine is the most surprising.

Brump. Look you here, my boy—[*shewing a letter*]—the work of her own fingers,

Bel. There, there, [*shewing the letter*] more eloquence than in all Cicero !

Brump. [reads.] “ Dear Mr. Brumpton, you are a sweet man, and your civilities”—

Bel. [reads.] “ You will be surprised at this letter ? and more so at the manner of conveying it.”

Brump. [reads.] “ The admiration of all our sex.”

Bel. [reads.] “ But I must hazard all, or fall a sacrifice to the avarice of my guardian”—

Brump. [reads.] “ And out of his hands it is in your power to relieve me”—

Bel. [reads.] “ I love you, Mr. Belford—will you despise me for telling you so ? I hope not.”

Brump. [reads.] “ Your's, indeed and indeed, until death us do part—Mary Ann Richley.”

Bel. [reads.] “ Contrive some means for my escape, and heaven and earth combined shall not keep you from me—the disconsolate Harriet.”

[*Exeunt together.*

Interspersing each other.

Both reading together eagerly.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

Enter OLDCASTLE and LOVIBOND.

Lovibond.

YES, she told me all about the young rake-hell's visits, gave me back his letter unopened, to return it to him with my own hands. Is not she a miracle of goodness and superior sense!

Old. It was very sensible. How often will you ask me?

Lovi. Is she not trained up in the paths that she should walk? When will Mary Ann do as much?

Old. Ay! there it stings! He has heard all, and I am blown! [Aside.]

Lovi. I have seen my gentleman since; I have given him his letters; told him what a mortal aversion she has to him; and, I warrant me, I have sent him off with a flea in his ear.

Old. I thought to ha' done the same with young Brumpton; but the minx has so bamboozled me! [Aside.]

Lovi. You seem disturbed, ha! ha! mortified at my success, I suppose—ha! ha!—or some fly-flap has caught Mary Ann, and she, poor thing—

Old. He has hit the nail o' the head. [Aside.] You need not trouble your head about Mary Ann: leave her to my care, Sir—

Lovi. But, Mr. Oldcastle—

Old. But, brother Lovibond—

Lovi. You are the strangest man—

Old. Po! po! you have no friendship for any body.

Lovi. No friendship!

Old. None: all for yourself, and wishing for other people's misfortunes—

Lovi. This is your gratitude, Mr. Oldcastle! Did not I help you to a rich young spendthrift, who wanted a thousand pounds; and did not he give you his bond, and then did not I make him draw a bill upon you for the money, and did not I bid you sue for both the bond and the bill? Was not I a witness in the cause for you? I'll have you indicted for subornation of perjury—

Old. If you go to that, who taught you to sink ships in the chops of the Channel?

Lovi. And who shewed you the way to be an engrosser of corn, and a forestaller of markets?

Old. Your smuggling, Mr. Lovibond—

Lovi. Your usury, Mr. Oldcastle—

Old. Mighty well! I see what it's come to. These are the thanks I meet with—I that first laid the scheme of keeping these girls' fortunes all to ourselves. Here ends all intercourse between us; I break off; I have no more to say to you; and so now you know my resolution— [Exit,

Lovi. Ha! ha! what a turmoil the poor man has put himself in! ha! ha! Things are going wrong with him: I never shall be at rest till I see the bottom of all this. [Exit.

Enter Sir THEODORE and BRISK.

Sir Theo. And look ye, Sir, if ever you presume to meddle again between father and son—

Brisk. I meddle, Sir, between—

Sir Theo. If ever again I lay my finger upon a single act of your's—

Brisk. Sir, if you would permit me, all this expence of passion might be saved—I have, to be sure, been caught tripping a little or so; but it is never too late to take up; I have reflected upon the matter, and without any great pretence to more wisdom than falls to the share of the like of

me—I have obtained my dismission, and bid adieu to my master's service for ever—

Sir Theo. Quitted his service, have you?

Brisk. Yes, Sir, I am going down to my father's in the country—My father's in a very pretty way; has some very good farms, and so I think to settle there for the rest of my days—

Sir Theo. I am glad of this, sirrah, and since you have left him, I forgive you, do you see;—here, here's something to bear your expences down—I commend your resolution much—But hark ye, Brisk—now you are going,—it will be honest of you to inform me—it will make some amends for what is past—is my son really in love with this girl?

Brisk. At present he is, but la! Sir, if she were once remov'd out of his way—

Sir Theo. That is what I have been thinking of—that would do the business, would not it?—

Brisk. Most clearly, Sir—out of sight, out of mind with him—If, in return for your honour's goodness, by any little service in my poor way—

Sir Theo. I thank you, Brisk, I thank you—but there will be no occasion for you—I have employed an elderly body, a good cunning matron-like woman, who understands the whole art of laying sponges for young damsels.

Brisk. Nothing can be better imagined, Sir—

Sir Theo. She is to insinuate herself into the house, as such people know how to do—

Brisk. No doubt, Sir—

Sir Theo. And when she has allured my young madam abroad with her, she shall then be so disposed of, that he may beat the bush long enough before he finds her, I warrant him—

Brisk. You have hit upon the only way in the world, Sir,

Sir Theo. It is an honest artifice, Brisk, to rescue the coxcomb from destruction—I wish you well, Brisk—I wish you well. [Exit.]

Brisk. Health attend your honour!—So, here's a mine detected!—and my master's flying wild about the town, thinking it's all enchanted ground he treads, and at last he'll be blown up in the air—with all my heart let him; let him see how he looks when he comes down again—and yet—there again now, temptations are beginning their old trade—well, something must be done, and so now mine away, Sir Theodore;—be as good a pioneer as you will, I warrant me I'll countermine you—

[Exit.]

SCENE I.

Oldcastle's House. Enter PETER and BRIDGET.

Peter. It's pure lucky, Bridget, he did not find the gentleman in the closet—

Brid. He lay close all the time like a mouse in a cheese—and master walked about the room, and gnawed his lip, and gnashed his teeth,—and gave the table an hugeous rap with his stick,—and fetched a deep groan, and did not say so much as one word,—and then led Miss Mary Ann out of the room—

Peter. I'll tell you what, Bridget, it's all owing to his finding out the young gentleman's visits here to Miss Mary Ann—

Brid. Yes, yes;—it stands to reason how it must be that—dear me! he locks poor Miss Mary Ann up here, for all the world like an horse in a pound, and I can't tell why or by reason whereof, not I—

Peter. I'll tell you, Bridget—I understand these matters

—he locks her up, do you see, because as why he is troubled with jealousy—

Brid. But how should that enter his head?

Peter. Oh! that pops into his head, because—

Brid. What is jealousy, pray, Peter?

Peter. Dear heart, you are such another—jealousy, you may know, won't let a body sleep; it's for all the world like so many rats behind the wainscot. I'll tell you now by way of likeness.—The gentleman, you know, *gave* you a guinea.—Now, putting case, any body was to come for to take away your guinea, do you see, that would put you in a passion—would it not?

Brid. Oh! I understand it now—

Peter. It's as like it as any thing: for see but here—Miss Mary Ann is his guinea—and you know when a body wants to be fingering another man's money, what does he do then? Why, he brings you down to 'sizes an whole heap of London counsel, to quarrel about it, and abuse one another, and be together by the ears for ever so many hours.

Brid. I remember all that, and it's as like Miss Mary Ann as it can stare—but then I want to know why does not every body make the same fuss, and lock his wife up too?

Peter. Po! you fool! that's because every body does not love his wife as well as a guinea.

Brid. Then I understands the whole git of it—But la! look ye there!

Peter. It's master, as sure as a gun—how he looks, Bridget! Let us go out of his way. [Exeunt.

Enter OLDCASTLE.

The perfidious jade! What a trick she has played me! Oh!—the little treacherous—

Enter MARY ANN.

Mary. La ! you look so strange ! you are enough to frighten a body !

Old. Mary Ann, I have seen Mr. Brumpton—

Mary. Have you ? [Laughs aside.]

Old. He was wonderfully pleased with your letter—

Mary. [Smiling aside.] By goles, I know why.

Old. What did you say to him ?

Mary. Say to him ! [Turns away, and smiles.]

Old. Did you write what I bid you ?

Mary. [Laughing.] Altered it a little bit !

Old. A good deal, I fancy.

Mary. [Laughs.] By gingo, I played you that trick.

Old. And was not it base to deceive your guardian, who loves you dearly, and intends to make you his wedded wife ?

Mary. I could not find it in my heart to say the things you wanted me—

Old. And don't you consider what a crime it is ?

Mary. It was only to play upon you—

Old. But such wicked letters, Mary Ann—

Mary. It was you shewed me the way—How should I have thought of such a thing ?

Old. That stings—that galls—[Aside.] But there are women, Mary Ann, who can write without being bid—

Mary. What, all out of their own heads ?

Old. Even so.

Mary. And what do they write

Old. They make assignations ; inform their gallants when their husbands are to be from home ;—they fix the time for amorous meetings, at routs and drums—

Mary. Rout and drums ! What be they ?

Old. Wicked assemblies ! where women lose more than they can pay, and then pawn their persons, together with the

husband's honour, and so infamously pay off the debts they have contracted.

Mary. And then do the men toy and play, and take e'm round the waist?

Old. Ay! then their point is gained! —

Mary. [Smiling.] That's comical enough!

Old. And then they fly wild about this town—to the seducing gaieties of Vauxhall and Ranelagh? —

Mary. La! I never heard of those! —

Old. Ranelagh, child, is a wicked round of sin, intrigue, and clandestine love; where crowds gather together, stealing glances, exchanging letters, negotiating riotous pleasures. — Vauxhall is a very paradise of forbidden fruits, where shady walks exclude the conscious day, and every blandishment of sense, music, wine, and opportunity, conspire to waken the voluptuous passions.

Mary. [Smiling.] And must not Mary Ann see those places?

Old. No! never, never, Mary Ann.—Here—here is the marriage-act for you to read—all young girls ought to have it by heart.—This will teach them how unnatural it is to fall in love, without the consent of King, Lords, and Commons!

Mary. Ah! but I can't stay for their leave;—they are too great folks for me to think of!

Old. Take it up stairs with you—it is a very edifying tract!

Mary. Very well, I'll go—[as she is going.] I'll go and try if I can't write a letter out of my own head! [Exit.

Old. When she has read the marriage-act, she will have a proper sense of her duty.—So, Peter!—So, Bridget!—walk in— /

Enter PETER and BRIDGET.

Old. Now, if I can tutor these to my mind— [Aside.

Brid. For the love of mercy, Sir—

Peter. I'll never do so any more, master——

Old. Come hither both—I am not angry.—You are no strangers to the affection I bear Mary Ann——

Brid. No, that's for sure;—you love her as well as you do a guinea——

Old. How now, Malapert!

Brid. I am sure Peter said so.

Peter. No—not I—for the varsal world!

Old. What's the matter, numskulls!—Listen to me.—Watch my house well: and be sure you never let any powdered fops put a foot over the threshold of my door——

Brid. Yes, Sir!

Peter. No, Sir!

Old. But the wily arts of young men!—Think of a gay embroidered coxcomb coming to you with a piteous look—“I languish for your mistress; I die in her absence; let me but see her, or else I have one foot in my grave already.”

Peter. Be gone about your business, fellow, says I: this is no place for you; my young mistress desires no such trumpery!

Old. Mighty well, Peter! It can't be better.—But you, Mrs. Bridget, will take some compassion upon a poor dying swain——

Brid. Go farther a field, and set up the sign of the horns somewhere else! do: no admittance for you here——

Old. Charming, Bridget, charming—you do it wonderfully!—But then says he, “I'll lie down in the street, and there breathe my last”——

Peter. And then I run up to the garret window, and souse a bucket of water on his head——

Old. Excellent! excellent!—it will cool his passion for him!—Have a bucket of water always ready!—ha! ha! I should like to see him streaming like a river god in the street!

I am delighted with you both—But then he comes with his damned bewitching gold—Here, Peter, to drink my health—Here, Mrs. Bridget, to buy you some tea.

Peter. We want none of your dross—

Brid. No—not we--- [Sheewing Oldcastle.]

Old. That's right---shove me---push me away.

Peter. Go about your business, I say.

Brid. Money is the root of all evil. [Both shoving him.]

Old. As I could wish---that's right---never spare me.

Peter. We hate you as we do a toad—

Brid. You vile ugly thing.]

Peter. We can't endure the sight of you---

Brid. You midnight owl! you griping miserly old—

Old. There, there, hold, hold—But here, says he, here's the money for you. [Holding out money.]

Peter. I humbly thank your honour. [Takes it.]

Old. Villain! traitor! [strikes him.] Is this your virtue at last?

Peter. La! what's the matter? was not I to take it?

Old. What have I been labouring all this time?—

Peter. But you did not shew the money at first—I could have refused it ever so long, if I had not seen the colour of it.—

Old. The way of the world—But you are never to take it—Money is the ruin of the world—It declares war, it patches up a peace, it makes lawyers speak, it makes some folks hold their tongues—Go, and think of all this—

Brid. and Peter. [going in a hurry.] Yes, Sir!

Old. And remember you have no business with money—Come, and shut the street-door after me.

Brid. and Peter. Yes, Sir.

[They run out.]

SCENE III.

The Street. Enter Lovibond.

Lovi. I must pay a friendly visit to brother Oldcastle—
Ha! ha! I know things are going wrong with him—I must
gratify my curiosity.

Enter Oldcastle.

Old. Brother Lovibond! I go on as I could wish—my fa-
mily is all as exact as clock-work—

Lovi I am glad of it; for the last time I met you—

Old. I beg your pardon—but now, loll toll loll! I am com-
pletely happy.

Enter Brumpton.

Brump. My dear old friend, I am glad I have met you—
Oh! such plague! such vexation!

Old. Mind him, brother Lovibond—you'll see what order
my family is in— [Aside.]

Brump. I was at the house but a little while since, and—

Old. And no admittance, I warrant—

Brump. Oh! the damndest adventure—

Old. A bucket of water upon your head, I reckon—ha!
ha!—

Brump. Not so bad as that—I got over the garden wall,
and, the adventure is whimsical too—the servants immedi-
ately conducted me up stairs, and—

Old. Conducted you up stairs!—

Lovi. Ha! ha!—mind him brother Biddulph—

Old. [aside to Lovibond.] Call me Oldcastle.

Lovi. Come, come, listen to this.

Brump. But, pox take it, my usual good fortune failed me—I was not in the room two minutes, when old Stiff-rump came tottering up—no way for a retreat, I was obliged to skulk in a dark nook, where I was almost stifled. In he came, and the lovely angel immediately accosted him in such a tone of simplicity——

Lovi. Simplicity—ha! ha!—well, well, let us hear.

Brump. The curmudgeon did not utter a syllable, walked about the room, fetched a deep groan, banged the table with his cane, took her by the arm, and led her away with him.

Lovi. Ha! ha! a narrow escape, brother Biddulph.

Old. Call me Oldcastle, I say.

Lovi. Ha! ha!—Simplicity is an admirable preservative of young girls!—Ha! ha! well, young gentleman, and how did all this end?

Brump. His back was no sooner turned, than I stole down stairs, tipped the servant a couple of guineas, and so got clear off.

Lovi. The old gentleman is going on delightfully—his family is all like clock-work!—ha! ha! ha!—I have satisfied my curiosity—a good day to you. [Exit.

Old. This is a mortal stroke!—Oh! Peter! Peter! Is this his virtue!—this his contempt of money!—this his bucket of water! [Exit.

Brump. What a crusty old Cent. per Cent. it is!

Enter BELFORD.

Bel. Brumpton!—Well encountered—I have been in quest of you this hour. This is the very crisis of your fate, man.

Brump. Hey! how! what's the matter?

Bel. A train of gunpowder is laid, and there is Sir Theodore with a lighted match ready to blow you to the moon.

Brump. Explain, my dear boy, explain.

Bel. Why then, in plain English—your father has hired one of the good women who are skilled in the trade of leading young virgins aside:—she, by his directions, is to tempt the mistress of your heart abroad, and then to convey her out of the kingdom, where she will be lost to you for ever.

Brump. 'Sdeath! it shan't be. I'll watch the house day and night. Where's that scoundrel Brisk?

Bel. Poor fellow, it was from him I had this information! he is out of his wits about this business!—

Brump. Out of his wits! he is always out of the way.—Not a moment to be lost—*I'll* to my post directly.

Bel. My affairs are in a thriving way—

Brump. I am glad to hear it.

Bel. Success attend you. [Exit.]

Brump. Oh! the devil! here's a piece of business. [Exit.]

SCENE IV.

Enter BRISK, in Woman's Cloaths, with a Bundle under his Arm.

Brisk. One push more, and then, Brisk, your toils are over—Come, that's the house.—As my master knows nothing of what I am about, I may have some chance to succeed here. Now for a few superannuated matron-like airs—[knocks at the door.]—I found out her mantua-maker by good luck, and so now I know my cue.

[Knocks at the door.]

Enter PETER.

Peter. Did you want any body, pray? No admittance here!

Brisk. Yes, truly, young man—La!—I am so jaded

with walking—Oh! such a pain in my side—and my head! it perfectly swims again—I must in and rest a bit—I have brought your young lady's wedding-gown.

Enter BRUMPTON.

Brump. Höw! is not that she?—Oh! the deceitful Machiavel in petticoats.

Peter. Why an you bring home her geers, that alters the case—walk in, Mrs.— [Exit.

Brisk. Ay! the little lady-bird will be as fine as an angel, I warrant her. [Goes in.

Brump. Oh! the damned decoy-duck, there she goes sure enough—I'll wait for her in the street—'Sdeath! she may get her out at the back-door—I'll alarm the old fellow directly—[raps loudly.]—The old bawd shall be put in the stocks—[raps again.]—Fire, fire, fire! Master Biddulph—

Old. [in the Balcony.] What's the matter there?—Who raps at my door in this—

Brump. Mr. Biddulph, Mr. Biddulph—

Old. What do you want?

Brump. You'll be robbed of your treasure, of all your heart holds dear—Miss Mary Ann will be stole from you—an old bawd will carry her off—she's in your house now—now—now—now—

Old. A bawd in my house!—I'll ferret her out, I warrant me— [Goes in.

Brump. Now, Sir Theodore, what becomes of your intrigue?—Bravo, Brumpton! this is well managed.

Enter BRISK, and OLDCASTLE beating him.

Old. Abominable procuress!—Horrible sorceress!—

Brump. [beating him.] Agent of darkness!—Minister of iniquity!

Brisk. Nay, good gentlemen—

Old. Vile seducer!—Detestable pandar!

Brump. Poacher of young game!—Kidnapper of innocence!

Brisk. For heaven's sake!—I'm down o' my knees—
have a little mercy!—

Old. Thou gipsy!—thou witch of Endor!

Brump. Get upon your broomstick, and fly away to Lapland!—

Brisk. The devil's in the man, he will spoil all—[throwing off his woman's apparel.]—Nay, then, since you go to that—your servant, master!

Brump. Confusion! what have I been doing? [Aside.]

Brisk. You have been in luck as well as I, master!

Old. A footman in petticoats all this time! Thou vile impostor!—thou Newgate-bird! [Beats him again.]

Brump. Wounds! Master Oldcastle all this time!—nay, then I must pretend—[Aside.]—How dare a servant of mine, rascal! [Beats him.]

Brisk. Wounds! Sir, it was in your service—

Brump. Who gave you orders, villain?— [Striking.]

Old. That's right!—Who gave you orders?

Brump. By what authority?

Old. Produce your authority!

Brump. To take such liberties with your master.

Brisk. I shall take the liberty to leave him for ever!—

[Runs off.]

Old. This is delightful! this is charming! The villain will come no more—he has paid the piper!

Brump. A scoundrel to behave in this manner! Oh, ho, ho! such an incident!—[in a fit of laughing.]—An unlucky dog I am—Poor Brisk, oh, ho!

Old. Mr. Brumpton !

Brump. Mr. Oldcastle ! What, are you Mr. Biddulph all this time ?

Old. You see what a plague and vexation you was bringing upon your friend.

Brump. My dear Sir, why did you not tell me at first?---If I had known that I was all this time trespassing upon your ground—

Old. You see what a scene of iniquity you have been engaged in!---But since you perceive your error, I am pacified.---This discovery is lucky---it will make an end of all ——I'll tell you what, you shall come and explain your mistake to Mary Ann this moment.

Brump. With the utmost pleasure, Sir, and wishing her all happiness, I will bid her farewell for ever.

Old. That will be right——you shall tell her that you repent, that you now renounce all wicked projects, and are convinced it would be the ruin of her to marry you.

Brump. Lead the way, Sir; I am ready to obey your commands.

Old. Very well ! enough said.

[Going.]

Brump. One dear interview!—Bravo ! Brumpton ! you're in luck.

Old. [turning about.] What do you say ?

Brump. Only that—you'll make a fair report of me to Sir Theodore.

Old. Ay ! ay ! that I'll do—come along.

Enter MARY ANN, in the Balcony.

Mary. La ! there's Mr. Brumpton with him.

Old. You baggage, what do you do there ? Get you in—Did not you hear the people cry fire ?

Mary. Aye! but they cry so many things in London, I did not mind that.

Old. Get you in, and never be seen in a balcony again! It was there you saw her first, Mr. Brumpton;—ha! ha!—I'll have it taken down—Come along. [Exeunt.

SCENE IV.

The House. Enter MARY ANN.

Mary. By goles this is pure——he is bringing him to see me—I have writ another letter since he has taught me that trick himself! and now I'll give it him if I can.

Enter OLDCASTLE and BRUMPTON.

Old. Mary Ann, I have brought the gentleman with me. He came to ask your pardon, and to tell you that he was going to be the ruin of you—Tell it to her yourself, Mr. Brumpton.

Mary. I am sure I forgive him with all my heart, so I do.

Old. Speak to her, Mr. Brumpton, speak to her.

Brump. Madam, I did not know what liberties I was taking with my friend, and though my conduct was inspired by real love, and your resistless charms——

Old. Pshaw! that's all preamble—to the point at once.— You had a mind to ruin her, say so without mincing it,

Brump. I must now renounce all farther pretensions, since to adore you any longer would be a violation of friendship, and an injury to this worthy gentleman, who has been intimate with my father for fifty years.

Old. You may pass that by.

Mary. Ah! he's a false man, and I don't love him. [Aside,

Brump. So that I most humbly beg your pardon.

Old. Go on, go on— [He is seized with a fit of coughing.

Brump. [while Oldcastle coughs.] And though I shall never efface your loved idea from my mind—

[He kisses his hand to her.

Mary. [she smiles.] You have my pardon, I told you so already.

Old. Oh! lord! lord! [recovering himself.] Well, have you told her you have done with her for ever?

Brump. Yes, I have got so far.

Old. Very well! Now, Mary Ann, on your part, let him know your mind.

Mary. Must I say all out of my own head?

Old. Ay ! ay ! tell him all—I wish brother Lovibond was witness to this. [Aside.

Mary. I am very glad you came to speak to me, Sir, and I understand you very well. [Smiles to him.

Old. But a little more at large. Tell him whom you chuse for an husband.

Mary. Why, here are two lovers, for whom I have very different sentiments—I love one of them—[frowning at Oldcastle.]—and—[smiling at Brumpton.]—I hate the other—The company of one is always agreeable—[to Oldcastle suddenly.]—and—[smiling at Brumpton.]—I don't care if I never see the other's face. I should like to be married to one of them—[to Oldcastle.]—and—[smiling to Brumpton.]—I had as soon be gibbeted as be married to the other. But my own Mr. Oldcastle—[toys and plays with him, then turning to Brumpton]—I love you of all things.

Old. You have won my heart.

Mary. But do you forgive I every thing now? Ah! you don't love me.

[Sings ‘Go, Naughty Man,’ and reaches a letter to Brump.

Old. I do—in troth I do—ha! ha! ha!—Mr. Brumpton, you see I have not suggested a word—all the dictates of her own heart—

Mary. [Smiling to Brumpton.] All from the very bottom of my heart!

Brump. Since I understand you, Ma'am, I shall remove the hated object from your sight.

Mary. The sooner the better.

[Then turns and plays with Oldcastle.

Brump. Mr. Oldcastle, I have the honour, Sir, to wish you all happiness.—And I fly this moment to put your commands in execution, Ma'am—

[Going.

Mary. You can't go about it too fast.

Brump. You may rely upon my honour.

Mary. And don't let me be unhappy any more.

Brump. You may depend upon me.

Old. So—so—now I'll attend you down.—Po!—no ceremony.—You have made me happy, Mr. Brumpton—you have made Mary Ann happy.—Come, I'll let you out, Mr. Brumpton.

[Exit.

Brump. [Kissing his hand to Mary Ann.] I attend you, Sir.

[Exit.

Mary. By goles, he has taught me a little wit himself; and if Mr. Brumpton follows my directions, I shall be pure and happy at last.

ACT V. SCENE I.

Lovibond's House. Enter HARRIET and BELFORD.

Harriet.

Hush! don't speak so loud, you'll give the alarm else to my keepers below stairs, and all is ruin'd—I don't know what to say, Mr. Belford;—my heart begins to fail me—

Bel. But after surmounting every difficulty, now in this last stage of the business to let your spirits sink, would be such a falling off from the character you have supported this day;—a character that surpasses all the heroines in romance, both for spirit and contrivance.

Har. The difficulties I had to encounter roused my spirits for a while, just as fits give us, for the time, more than our natural strength;—but now the conflict's over, my resolution staggers, and I am at full leisure to feel the weakness of my condition—I can't go through it, Mr. Belford, I can't indeed—

Bel. Nay, summon up your resolution—Our mutual vows, the happiness that waits us, every motive, a thousand things conspire, and call for all the constancy you are mistress of—

Har. But then to break through all the proprieties of conduct—all the decencies which my sex requires—

Bel. In a case like your's, the means are just which save you from destruction—

Har. I tremble for the event—I shan't be able to escape.

Bel. Trust yourself to me, my love—'tis but an easy step out of the window down upon the leads, and then through the neighbouring house—the people are in my interest—come, resume your courage—you cannot doubt my honour—

Har. But the censure of the world—nay, your own opinion of me—

Bel. The world will admire your spirit, and when 'tis known, that the old gentleman was your dupe, and carried on the plot himself, your invention will be applauded every where—

Har. Why, I can almost laugh at him even now—[Hears Lovibond coming.] Deliver me!—what shall I do? undone!—detected!—

Bel. This is the consequence of delaying too long—

Har. Run into this room;—make haste—dispatch [Shuts him in.] and to make safe work—[Puts the key in her pocket;

Enter LOVIBOND.

Lovi. Harriet, I am never happy but in your company—the minutes move with leaden feet, when I am out of your presence.

Har. And yet, you ill-natured man!—you can contrive to be out more than half the day—

Lovi. Chide me not;—you'll break my heart if you do—every frown on that face is a death warrant, and every smile is benefit of clergy—come, come, brighten up into happiness and love.

Har. You know your power over me—you can do what you please with your own Harriet!

Lovi. Can I?—you are too good.—

Har. Where have you been all this time?

Lovi. I have been—but you look pale—what is the matter?

Har. Occasioned by fretting at your absence—and that hideous man keeps me in a constant alarm—

Lovi. Don't waste a thought on him—he'll trouble you no more—tho' to do him justice, I believe his intentions were honourable—poor devil!—ha! ha!—I fancy he loves

you dearly—Well! but—poor brother Oldcastle!—your sister has so bamboozled him—

Har. My sister!

Lov. She has admitted a young gentleman to visit her—

Har. She could not be so wicked!—

Lovi. The girl has not erred so much from an evil disposition, as from ignorance—

Har. A very small share of sense, Mr. Lovibond, will give sufficient intimations of our duty—

Lovi. Very true—now the like of you would not have done such a thing for the world!—

Har. Not to be empress of the universe!—The young men of this age are such a profligate race—

Lovi. You are fit to instruct grey hairs—the young gentleman—one Mr. Brumpton—a wild, fiery, young spark—he was in the very house with her, and she hid him in the closet —ha! ha!

Har. In the closet! well! after that, I will never own her for my sister!—the wicked girl!—I am glad I have not visited her—

Lovi. Ha! ha! ha!—poor man!—he never suspected any thing—had it been my case, I should have smoked it in a moment—

Har. Without doubt!—there is no imposing upon you—

Lovi. Oh! no—no such thing—ha! ha!—I can see thro' a millstone—the eye of an eagle for a plot!—But come—come—it begins to grow late—come, let me hand you to your chamber, and then I'll lock you in safe from all harm till morning.

Har. Heavens! what shall I do now? [Aside.] Hush!—let me say a word to you first—don't speak loud.—My sister is indeed much worse than you can conceive—I wish you would step and bring Mr. Oldcastle hither directly.

Lovi. Now! what occasion can there be—

Har. She loves that Mr. Brumpton to distraction, and has actually made her escape, to follow the vile man.

Lovi. Made her escape!

Har. She is in that room now—I have locked her in—such wicked schemes as she has in her head! She has told me all, and intends to marry this Mr. Brumpton; she has found out that she is of age, and says she will be made a fool of no longer!—there's a spirit for you!

Lovi. A spirit indeed!

Har. But I have secured her, to prevent the disgrace, to ward off the ruin—and—

Lovi. That was considerate of you—let me go and talk to the young vixen.

Har. No—no—that will spoil all—I have pretended to connive at all this—But the most prudent step—I have learned all my prudence, you know, from you—

Lovi. Ay! an apt scholar you have been!

Har. You are very good—but there is no time to be lost—I would have you bring Mr. Oldcastle here directly, that he may find her in the very fact.

Lovi. Very good!—and then I shall be able to do the poor man a service, and make a jest of him into the bargain!—Keep her safe;—don't let her out—this will so torment him!—ha! ha!

[*Exit.*]

Har. I am glad my sister has found a lover, and I hope she'll marry him, with all my heart.—Is he gone? [*Listens at the door.*] Ay! I hear him lock the street-door after him—and now I'll venture to unlock this door.

Enter BELFORD.

Bel. Thou charming contriver!

Har. Oh!—this new danger has given flesh vigour to my spirits.

Bel. And now, my angel, we'll make sure of our happiness—come, trust yourself to my care—

Har. And yet—

Bel. Nay—no more doubts—our passage to the next house is without difficulty, and then liberty is ours.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

The Street. Enter LOVIBOND.

Lovi. I never was better pleased in all my life—I burn with impatience to see him—ha! ha!—I shall never be able to walk fast enough—ha! ha! ha!—

Enter OLDCASTLE.

Lovi. Well met! I wanted to see you.

Old. Oh! I am now the happiest man on earth. My troubles with young Brumpton are all at an end, and Mary Ann is safe at home.—

Lovi. Ay! as he thinks, poor man!—ha! ha! [Aside.

Old. You may laugh, but I shall like to see your plan succeed as well—what a dupe you will prove at last!—

Lovi. What a dupe you are now!—the bird is flown, man—Mary Ann has eloped.

Old. Ha! ha! ha! you make me laugh.

Lovi. How secure he is!—ha! ha!—he little dreams—I tell you she is gone—

Old. Always absurd!

[*Going out.*

Lovi. [following him.] You are ruined, I tell you.

Old. Ha! ha!—do you think I don't know better.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter HARRIET and BELFORD.

Bel. Don't alarm yourself, my angel—this is my house—
[Knocks at the door.]

Har. Oh! I shall certainly faint—

Enter BRUMPTON.

Brump. My dear Belford—

Har. Heavens! what's the matter?

Brump. Don't be frightened, Ma'am—

Bel. No—this is a friend of mine—well! Brumpton, the business?

Brump. My dearest Belford, this is the most critical moment of my life—I have bribed the servants—carried her off—she is mine—mine for ever—will you give me a room in your house for this one night?

Bel. Why this ceremony? you know you may command in my house—

Re-enter OLDCASTLE and LOVIBOND.

Old. What noise is that?—

Lovi. That's Brumpton, I know his voice—

Har. I am frightened to death.

Brump. The door opens, walk in, Ma'am, walk in—

[*Harriet goes in.*]

Bel. Light the lady up stairs.—

Old. Hush! Let us hear him—

Brump. I am wild with love, with rapture, and success!—I have carried her fairly off, in triumph, my dear boy! She was locked up in a closet, but I broke open the door—

Bel. I give you joy—but my own happiness calls—bring the lady as soon as you will—

[*Exit.*]

Brump. A thousand thanks, my dear Belford—Victoria! the prize is mine.

[*Exit.*]

Lovi. Are you convinced now?

Old. I am thunderstruck!—Robbery! Murder! I'll break open the door—Watchman, call a justice of peace—call Sir Theodore Brumpton—he lives just by—Mr. Oldcastle wants him—his son has robbed me—I'll alarm all the world! [Raps at the door.] Robbery! shipwreck! destruction! ruin!

Lovi. Ha! ha!—he feels it now, and I am not sorry for him—ha! ha!

Old. I am mad—I shall go distracted;—I shall end my days in Bedlam—[Enter a Servant.] I would fain speak a word here in the house.

Ser. Sir, my master is somewhat busy, and—

Old. I am plundered!—I must go in—oh! villain! villain!

[Rushes in.]

Lovi. Ha! ha!—now will he see which can train up a young girl best.

[Exit.]

SCENE III.

An Apartment in Belford's House. Enter BELFORD.

Bel. What's all this noise!—[Listens at the door.]—Ay! I hear his voice—How could my booby let him in? But I have lodged her safe, and this sword shall maintain possession—

Enter OLDCastle and LOVIBOND.

Old. Where is she? Where is the unfortunate?—Restore her directly—restore her to her two guardians.—We come to demand her of you.

Lovi. Yes, we demand her, Sir—we know she is here—and therefore—

Bel. My house is my castle, gentlemen, and nobody must offer—

Old. I'll search your house—I'll get a general warrant—She is an heiress—a ward of the High Court of Chancery—'tis a contempt ; you'll be committed for it ;—she is our property, in law and equity—I claim her, I demand her, and I will have her.

Bel. This is an unseasonable hour, gentlemen : to-morrow I shall be ready to answer your complaints ; in the mean time, I must beg you will leave me in quiet possession of my own house.

Lovi. But we are her guardians, Sir—both her guardians—the girl is under age !——

Bel. Mr. Lovibond, you are her guardian ; and what then, Sir?—Both of ye scandalous betrayers of your trust ! I know it all---each circumstance---You would impose upon her tender years, that you may infamously plunder that property which was confided to your care !——

Lovi. [Aside.] There is a cloud gathering !---We shall both be brought to a strict account---I had better make up this matter, that I may enjoy my own Harriet in security---

Old. You have run away with an heiress, and by the law of the land——

Bel. I have a right to her ;---I know she is of age, Sir, and it is my fixed resolution to marry her ! She has declared in my favour, and nothing shall be a bar to my happiness !

Old. [To Lovibond.] She is of age sure enough ; how did he find that out ? [Aside.]

Lovi. Better make the best of a bad bargain---[Aside.]---But let me understand you, Mr. Belford---Do you intend to marry her yourself?

Bel. It is my peremptory resolution. But all in honour, Sir—marriage articles, for the purpose of settling her whole fortune upon herself, are now drawing in the next room.

Lovi. I see what course I must take---If he marries her, I shall live in peace.—[*Aside*]—Mr. Oldcastle, the girl is of full age. Let me say a word in your ear—[*Aside to him*]—Consent to the marriage, and get a handsome allowance for the trouble and expence of her education—That word makes me laugh—ha ! ha ! ha !

Old. I am distracted ; what shall I do ?—[*Aside.*]—I thought young Brumpton was to marry her ?

Bel. No Brumpton on earth shall rob me of her.

Old. The trouble, and the fondness with which we have reared her—

Lovi. He will allow for that.

Old. I have long loved her—Can't you resign her now—you will be the death of me else ?

Lovi. Think no more of her, she is not worthy of your regard. Mr. Belford will behave like a gentleman in matters of account, and—

Bel. Prescribe your terms—I am ready to agree the matter this moment.

Old. A release for the interest of rents and profits—a cool five thousand for extraordinary trouble, and for her music-master and her dancing-master.

Lovi. He was her only master himself—ha ! ha ! [*Aside*.]

Bel. Agreed !

Lovi. Close with him—close with him directly.

Old. I wish you would resign her to me.

Bel. I will not defer my happiness beyond to-morrow morning.—My lawyer is in the next room ; let him draw up a memorandum between us, and your conditions are granted.

Lovi. It shall be done—we will both sign—Come, don't hesitate. [*To Oldcastle*.]

Old. I shall break my heart!—

Lovi. Po!—no hesitating—come and finish the business.

Old. It is a terrible stroke!

Lovi. Never stand debating—you have made the best of a bad bargain—lose no time— [Forcing him along.]

Odl. But Mr. Belford—

Lovi. We must resign her—we must give her up—Come along, man. [Forces him out.]

Bel. I attend you, gentlemen—I agree to your proposals. [Following them.]

Enter BRUMPTON and MARY ANN.

Brump. Walk in, my angel; you are secure here.

Bel. Ha! Brumpton, I give you joy! I congratulate you too, Ma'am—and—

Mary. I thank you kindly, Sir.

Brump. And now, Belford, through the perils of this day we have both at last attained our utmost wishes. I could be merry about it, but I must give my fellow Brisk some directions. I have such a story to tell you—ha! ha!—I shall be with you in an instant. [Exit.]

Mary. La! what a pretty room here is!

Bel. Your appearance tells me, Ma'am, that my friend Brumpton has found a treasure.

Mary. I am sure, I am fortunate in finding him—for I led such a life! you can't think how dismal!

Bel. The scene will now be changed, and the pleasures of life will court you on every side.

Enter OLDCASTLE.

Old. Oh! the little compound of treachery and fraud!

[Aside, and listening.]

Mary. I was kept from morning to night mewed up at home, and he talked such a parcel of bugbears to frighten a body—

Old. Oh the traitress!

Mary. And he said if I looked at a sweet smiling young

gentleman, that I should be murdered, and devoured, and swallowed up!

Bel. An old blockhead!

Mary. Yes, I thought as much.—But I am sure I am obliged to Peter and Bridget for letting me out, and they shall come and live with me, so they shall.—Do you know our Peter and Bridget?

Old. They shall both be hanged.

[*Aside.*]

Mary. And my old guardian wanted to marry me himself: but—[laughs]—he talked in such a manner, and said such strange things—but—[laughs]—the joke was, he taught me how to write letters, and I should never have thought of such a thing had he not put me in the head on't. And he is so old, and totters about so; and he calls me his lambkin; and bids me read the marriage-act, and a heap of trumpery.—An hideous, ugly, old scare-crow!—La! there he is.

[*She is disconcerted.*]

Old. I have signed, Mr. Belford, and they wait for you.

Bel. I shall give you no delay, Sir. [Exit.]

Old. Thou serpent, whom I have warmed and cherished in my bosom!—you must sting your benefactor at last, must you?—Did not I promise to marry you?

Mary. Yes, but by goles, I thank you for that though—

Old. And will you desert me for a stranger?

Mary. [*sbe laughs.*] He's a sweet man!

Old. Viper!—this is your simplicity, is it?—I, who loved you so—

Mary. Ah!—but his love is more agreeable by half.

Enter LOVIBOND and BELFORD.

Lovi. Well! now every thing is settled.—So, Madam, you are there, are you?—ha! ha! Brother Oldcastle, I always told you how this would end—ha! ha! ha!

Old. If she had minded my instructions—

Lovi. Ha! ha!—instructions!—You brought it all upon yourself—but 'tis better as it is—your head would have ached all the rest of your days—ha! ha! ha!—I am heartily glad of this—ha! ha!—Come, Mr. Belford, I'll give her away—here, take your wife—

Old. Wounds! I can't stand this—I'll not be a witness.

[*Goes out.*

Lovi. But you shall be a witness; you are a party concerned—you must come back. [Exit after him.]

Bel. Since they have agreed the matter, Harriet shall make her appearance. [Exit.]

MARY ANN alone.

What does all this mean?—Sure it can't be sister Harriet he talks of!

Lovi. [*without.*] You must, you shall come back.

Enter BELFORD, leading in HARRIET.

Bel. Don't be frightened—you are the object of my heart, and they will give you away.

Lovi. [*forcing in Oldcastle, without looking behind him.*] You are a party to the agreement—you must see her given away.

Bel. Here's the lady. [Leading her to Lovibond.]

Lovi. Ay! ay! give me her hand—[*without seeing her*]—you shall see the business done, Mr. Oldcastle.—Here, here—wounds! what's all this?—Harriet!

Old. Huzza!—a reprieve!

Mary. Ah! sister there—what, have you been writing letters too? [*Goes up to her.*] I be glad to see you—

Lovi. What does all this mean?—what brought you hither, Madam?

Har. My love for this gentleman.

[*She takes Belford by the hand.*

Old. Ha ! ha ! ha !—she is his wife all this time.

Har. I was not by any means worthy of you, Sir—and so I have transferred my affections where I think they will be placed to advantage.

Lovi. I am ready to sink into the ground with amazement !

Old. Loll, toll, loll—brother Lovibond, you brought it all upon yourself—ha ! ha ! ha !—I pity and laugh at you—ha ! ha !—this is the education you have given her—ha ! ha !

Lovi. I shall die upon the spot.

Old. Ha ! ha !—I saw what it would all end in—[*Follows him about.*] She would have been too young a wife for you, man—ha ! ha !—I am heartily glad of it—here, here, I'll give her away—here, Mr. Belford, take your wife—

Bel. I accept her at your hand.

Har. And I give you mine, with all my heart.

Old. Now, who understands education ?—Come, Madam, come you home with me.— [Taking hold of Mary Ann.

Mary. Ah ! but I can't do that, for I be married as well as you, sister—[*Runs over to her.*]—He carried me to a parson, and it was, for all the world, like what you used to say [*to Oldcastle*] about love, honour, and obey—

Old. What do I hear ?

Enter BRUMPTON.

Brump. Oh ! ho ! ho !—what a day of adventures have I had ! but fortune has at last crowned me with success—My good genius has attended me throughout—my sweet, my lovely bride !

Old. Oh ! Mr. Brumpton!—what a life you have led me !

Enter Sir THEODORE and BRISK.

Sir Theo. Where is the graceless, the profligate, the abandoned!—So, Sir! [To Brumpton] why am I to be called out of my house on account of your midnight practices?

Old. Oh! Sir Theodore, I am glad you are come—your son will be the death of me!—

Sir Theo. What does all this mean, Sir?

Brump. That I am married to this lady, Sir—

Old. He has robbed me of her;—plundered me;—he will go to the gallows for it—she is an heiress!

Lovi. Well! this is some comfort—ha! ha!—brother Oldcastle, we are both in the same predicament.

Sir Theo. An heiress, say you?—George, give me your hand, since you have not thrown yourself away—and was it your ward all this time?

Brump. Yes, Sir,—ha! ha! ha!—this is the lady whom he called a milliner's 'prentice—ha! ha!

Sir Theo. Ha! ha!—and that wa' his fetch to deceive me, was it? ha! ha!

Lovi. Ha! ha!—you have managed it charmingly—ha! ha!

Old. You'll drive me mad all of you—

Brump.

Sir Theo. } Ha! ha! ha!

Lovi.

[All laugh heartily.

Mary. This is pure comical!—

Old. Ah! I shall never survive this!

Sir Theo. Nay, no uneasiness, Mr. Oldcastle.

Brisk. I fancy we need not think any more of Hampshire now, Sir Theodore!—

Sir Theo. What, are you there, Brisk?—You have been a sad rogue.

Brisk. I have been working for the good of your family, Sir!—

Sir Theo. So you have; I forgive you all—George, I give you joy, with all my heart.

Brump. You see, Sir, I have married a fortune for the good of my children; and the lady's beauty, I fancy, won't offend you.

Sir Theo. No, I embrace her as my daughter.

Mary. Ah! you are very good, Sir—

Sir Theo. Come, Mr. Oldcastle, never be dejected—

Old. Oh! I have lost a treasure—

Brump. Yet you must excuse me, Sir, when you recollect the letter the lady flung me out of the window!

Lovi. Flung him a letter!—ha! ha!

Brump. And when you reflect, that you yourself brought me into her presence to receive this letter, in which she prays me to be her deliverer! [Gives him the letter.]

Lovi. Ha! ha! the contriver of his own misfortunes!—Gave her the opportunity himself—ha! ha!

Bel. And when you consider, Mr. Lovibond, that you brought me Harriet's messages, and delivered me this letter with your own hand!—

Lovi. How is this?— [Reading it to himself.]

Har. A declaration of my heart—I had nobody to carry it but you!—

Old. The contriver of his own ruin!—delivered her letter himself! ha! ha!—how well he knows the world!—

Brump. Belford, give me your hand—and so we have been struggling hard for two sisters all this time!—

Bel. We have, and from henceforth shall live both friends and brothers!

Old. Oh! Mary Ann!—you have deceived me, but I shall be glad to see you happy.

Mary. And I am sure, I shall be always glad to see you, if you live these three years to come—Here's your marriage-act for you!—Sister Harriet, la! I longed like any thing to see you—and I am glad we are both happy at last—

Brum. A right use made of this event, will be of general service to us all—To these gentlemen it may prove a School for Guardians, where they will learn not to bring upon themselves the reproach of a dishonest, an amorous, and contemptible old age!—We, Belford, and these ladies, who are now embarked on a voyage for life,—we cannot fail of happiness—

*To youth sure rapture marriage ever brings,
Where from esteem the happy union springs.*

[*Exeunt.*



EPILOGUE.

SPOKEN BY MISS ELLIOT.

LADIES, your servant—servant, gentlemen all—
The same good folks to you—both great and small :
Here's Mary Ann again :—but that an't fair,
To jeer a simple girl you might forbear.
Who knows, since married,—though you laugh and gaze,
But Mary Ann may learn your London ways ?
May ape your fashions, since you've shewn her bow,
And drop the mark at once—as I do now.

Thus you behold,—whatever the condition,
To new extremes how easy the transition.
'Tis so through life :—to town from country fairs
The clown comes up, and gapes, and laughs, and stares !
Give him a liv'ry,—whims unknown before !
He learns his master's follies to do o'er ;
He drinks, turns coxcomb, and betis five to four.

Pray, may I, ladies, touch your modish life,
And shew good sense and fashion there at strife ?
“ Oh ! do Miss Elliot,” says a prude with spite,
“ Pull 'em to pieces ; bring their faults to light ;
Pulling to pieces is my dear delight.”
Why then each fair one seems a diff'rent creature
From what she's meant, and travesties her nature.

Proud of defects, Flirtilla swims along,
Politely weak, and elegantly wrong :
Through the gay round of time her only care
To fix the patch, and guide a straggling hair.

Lady Camilla, form'd to seize the rein,
To rival John, and smack along the plain ;
In London sickens with dissembled airs,
And “ help me—help me up these odious stairs !”

*Nature's best gifts we all with pride disclaim ;
We lisp, we totter, deaf, and blind, and lame.
The tongue indeed we women ne'er confine ;
—Scandal's too dear a pleasure to resign !
Scandal, and cards, tea, mirth, and spleen, a ball,
Comus !—the monkey too !—and there's the life of all :
A life of whim !—till from the faded eye,
And wither'd form, the trembling graces fly.*

*There's a true picture !—how do ye like it, ladies ?
How is the light ? and how do ye think the shade is ?
A copy hence our simple girl may make ;
Unless she should this wiser counsel take---
Be rul'd by reason for your beauty's sake.
Reason still gives to radiant eyes their grace,
Warren's imperial milk—for ev'ry face.
Beauty, ye fair, may forge the lover's chain ;
But the mind's charms your empire must maintain.*

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